

THE
PORTION
OF
GOD'S People :

OR THE
Great Privileges and Blessings
OF
All the Children of GOD,
in Time, and to Eternity.

ALSO
The MEANS of Attaining that Blessed
and Happy Condition and a Comfortable
Sense thereof.

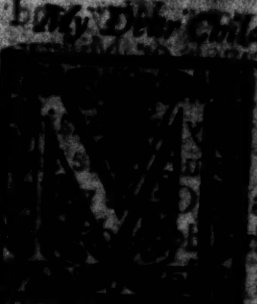
Together with DIRECTIONS for their
DAILY WALK, in order to the Great End
of Glorifying GOD here, and Enjoying him in
Heaven for ever.

By D. D. Esq;

Godliness is profitable to all things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come. 1 Tim. iv. 8.

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GRANDCHILDREN.



My Dear Children,
My Heart's Desire and Prayer for you all, is, that you may be sav'd. You are in many Respects dear to me, and it is (I hope) my chiefest Desire to approve my self faithful to you, and by all such Means as I can apprehend proper and conducing to it, useful and serviceable to you, to express my Affection, and the sincere and earnest Desire I have both of your temporal, and your spiritual and eternal Welfare: For these my poor Prayers shall not (I hope, thro the Lord's Assistance), be wanting on your behalf, whilst I am on this side the Grave, and it is my Desire to second them with my sincere Endeavours, as far as the Lord shall enable me, and make me instrumental to promote the same.
You are, I know, under the Eye and Inspection of careful and tender Parents; the Lord make you truly sensible of the great Privilege and Advantage you have therein above many others, and enable you to prize it highly,

The Epistle Dedicatory

highly, and thankfully to improve it, in your affectionate and diligent Observance of them, and Obedience to them, in all things in the Lord, and in whatsoever is agreeable to his Will; and this may make the Counsels and Help of other Relations the less needful for you: yet I cannot but hope that my Wife in these Sheets (which were at first intended to be but few) may be some way useful also to you. And if the Lord shall please to accompany them with his Blessing upon your Perusal of them, I am fully assur'd they shall be so; and then if my Labour and Pains in writing them were ten thousand times more, I should think it well bestow'd (dear Children) on you: And therefore for your own sakes, and for the Lord's sake, whole you are, and whom you are under the greatest Obligation to serve and to live unto, I must again request your serious Perusal and Observance of what I have here recommended to you. You are yet young, and (thro the Lord's great Goodness and Mercy) you are yet very hopeful; but you are All of you entering into a World of Snares and Temptations: It is not your *Rest*, nor is that to be expected in it; it is but your State of *Probation* and *Trial* that here you are in for a few Days, or Years perhaps, and it is your Way and Passage only into an eternal State of Happiness or Misery. You have many spiritual and dangerous Enemies to encounter with, your Continuance here is very uncertain, and on your well or ill improvement of your Time and Talents, of all those Mercies and Means of Grace which you are here privileg'd and intrusted with, depends your everlasting State. We are going, and it will not be long before our Places and Relations here will know us no more in this World; and you are following after. Your Parents and Friends that go before you, and the youngest of you, have yet no Certainty of Continuance in it, as we see by daily Experience; and as you your selves have found, by that early Breach which it has pleas'd the Lord to make amongst you; and then all the Helps, and Mercies, and Means of Grace which you yet enjoy, will cease, and be at an end with you for ever. All these are awakening Calls out of our Security, and the Lord grant that they may be so, that we may be up and doing, getting Oil into our Vessels, securing our best and greatest Interest and Concern in this our Day, and doing the Work

The Epistle Dedicatory.

iv

Work that we were sent into the World about, before the Night of Death cometh, in which there will be no longer any Work to be done. The Day of our Lord's coming and Resurrection will then succeed, and the most dreadful will be the Reflection then to us upon every Day and Hour of the Time we have here spent in the Service of Sin and Satan. And on the contrary, with what Joy and Triumph may we look back upon that Time, which (thru such and infinite Grace) we have been enabled to employ faithfully and diligently in our blessed Lord and Master's Work and Service, and therein begun promoting the Happiness and Welfare of our own precious and immortal Souls?

And therefore now (dear Children) having in the Sincerity (I hope) of my Heart press'd upon you the serious Consideration of these things, I recommend you to the Lord, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are sanctify'd thro' Faith which is in him. And having sought first unto him for Direction herein, and for his Blessing upon these my poor Endeavours, I shall offer them to you with the like Importunity and tender Affection, as if they were my last and dying words. And the greatest part of what you find contain'd here in this Volume, hath been (or most of the Materials thereof) collected out of other Authors, some of whom have written more largely on the same Subjects, I hope you will not think the worse, but better of it upon that Account, being brought to your Perusal only by my Hand, and convey'd to you from such Pens as were much more valuable than my own. Some things being abridg'd and brought herein into a narrower Compass, I hope they will not be without their Usefulness in that respect, but may be more ready at hand upon all occasions, being Subjects (many of them) of daily and continual use. And I shall also wish that these Collections from them may lead you to the Perusal of those Authors themselves, from whom I have gather'd so much of what I have written. The reading of which (as you have Time and Opportunity) I would recommend to you; particularly Mr. R. Allen's *Vindiciae Pictarum*, the first and second Part, with his *Treatise of Conversion*; and that valuable Discourse

Difficultie of the Reformation. *Some Sheets* which I intended to add to an Appendix to this Book, I have now put together. Though made a different Treatise, and for some other have added it to some of them. And tho' it is of a different Nature, being more topical, and seems something foreign to it, yet it will not, I hope, be unuseful towards the carrying on the great End design'd by all I have writ, by showing you of the several Steps that have been taken to carry on and perfect that most desirable Reformation from Popish Darkness, Error, and Superstition, which was at first design'd, by degrees, to be further carry'd on and perfected; the want of which hath been so long the Cause of Nonconformity, and kept so many out, that might have been very useful Members in the Church of Christ, and open'd a Gap to our Popish Adversaries. An impartial Search into these things, and a clear and thorow Understanding of them, having a Tendency to promote that Christian Love and Unity that is so desirable amongst Protestants, that are already join'd together in the Profession of the same Christian Faith, and are Fellow-Members of the same mystical Body of Christ. The Case of the Dissenters being more clearly known (which hath by some, either thro Mistake or Prejudice, been so greatly misrepresented) and that Matter being set in a true Light, I hope might tend very much to the removing of those Heats and Prejudices, that many have blindly, and (for want of a thorow Inquiry into these Matters) ignorantly entertain'd, and been led into, to the great prejudice of the Christian Interest, and Ruin of that Christian Love and Concord, that would so much adorn our holy Profession, and which hath so long been opening a Gap, and giving too great an Umbrage and Handle to our Popish Adversaries, and Encouragement to them in their restless Designs against us, and tending indeed so much to the Ruin and Overthrow of all true Religion; while many of the most serious Professors of it have been discountenanc'd, and endeavour'd to be run down and disgrac'd, even by their Fellow-Protestants and Fellow-Christians, professing the same Faith and holy Religion with themselves.

What

What you find further added touching to Cathedrals
 Worship and Ceremonies, shall I leave to you, to
 impose your own Judgments in these things, or censure
 thereby any Church Discipline that is of different Sen-
 timents touching it. In which it might be objected, and
 could not easily be answered, that you have been
 endeavouring that that sort of Worship, viz. in our Ca-
 thedrams, which hath been so much objected against as
 unwarrantable by many judicious Christians, might be
 set before you in a true Light, and not in a
 self-Original. And that you might be brought thereby
 to search more narrowly into those things, which have
 been such Matters of Scruple and Doubt to many serious
 Christians, in Order to your more firm Establishment in
 the Truth, that that Homage and Worship we give to
 the Great and infinitely Holy God, may not be founded
 only upon the Devices and Inventions of Men; but that
 (when it is impartially considered, and brought first to
 the Balance of the Sanctuary) the Worship we offer to
 him may be found warranted by the unerring Rule of
 Gods Word, which is the Standard of all Truth.
 As it was your spiritual and everlasting Good, and the
 winning of your Souls to Christ, which was, I hope,
 the great Motive in this Undertaking; so if that great
 and good Blessing thro the Blessing of the Lord upon my
 poor Endeavours herein may be any ways promoted, I
 shall have great cause for ever to bless his holy Name,
 that he hath put it into my Heart to set about this Work,
 and hath enabled me to go thro with it, and in such a
 measure to be serviceable to you in the furthering your
 Salvation. And that you may the better know how to
 make use of what you find written herein, I shall ac-
 quaint you briefly with the Method and Design thereof.
 After a prefatory Discourse of the great, but too much
 neglected Duty of *Perious Consideration* of our ways, and
 frequent retiring our selves from the Cares and Business
 of this Life, to consider the great Concern and End of
 our living in the World, and how far we are pursuing of
 it, and endeavouring to answer it (wherein you will
 find some quickening Motives, and Arguments to excite
 you to this Duty.)

I have, in the first Part, treated of those great and
 important Truths that are so necessary to be known and
 believ'd,

beloved Son, containing the Great God, his Father and
 Holy Spirit, who is infinitely happy, satisfied in him-
 self from all Eternity, and who is the eternal Spring
 and Fountain of all Being, Blessings, and Happiness to
 his Creatures. (2) Of the Trinity, the three Persons of
 the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who
 are so distinguished, but not divided, one God in three
 Persons. (3) Of the Works of God, particularly of
 Man's Creation after his own Image, which has made him
 capable of enjoying and glorifying him, and of being made
 eternally happy and blessed in the full Enjoyment of him
 for ever. (4) Of the first Creation of Man, which
 the Lord was pleased to enter into with Man, and of
 his Apostacy from God, by breaking that Covenant, into
 his Misery thereby. (5) I have treated of the Covenant
 of Grace, which the Lord, in infinite Mercy, was pleased
 to make anew with him, in order to his Deliverance out
 of that State of Sin and Misery, and bringing him down
 into a State of Reconciliation with himself again, and of
 eternal Salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. (6) Of the
 Foundation of that new and better Covenant, the Cove-
 nant of Redemption. (7) Of Christ, the blessed Head
 and Mediator of that Covenant. (8) The great Blessings
 and Blessings contained in the Covenant of Grace, made
 sure to every true Believer, being the spiritual Seed and
 Members of Christ, and founded upon the Covenant of
 Redemption. (9) Of the Condition and Terms of that
 Covenant. (10) Of Baptism, the initiating Ordinance,
 whereby we are at first brought into that Covenant, (11)
 in our Infancy, and laid under an everlasting engage-
 ment, and Obligation, on our part, to be the Lord's.
 In the second Part, because of the great Danger of
 Presumption, and of your being mistaken in so great and
 weighty a Concern as the State of your Souls, being that
 which your eternal Happiness and Welfare depends so
 much upon; I have, in the next place, treated of Regene-
 ration and the New Birth, which is, by many, made
 little account of, and fatally conceived by others to be
 inseparably annexed to the Ordinance of Baptism. I have
 therefore endeavoured to shew the absolute Necessity of
 such a Change as is wrought by the Almighty Power of
 the Holy Spirit in the Hearts of Sinners; and this I have
 done, in order to your Enquiry and Examination of your
 selves

Give seriously, about the state of your Soul. God-ward, and whether you have experienced such a real and abiding Change, wrought in your Lives, or not: whereby you may perceive what your Eternal Condition, for the present, and without such a Change, is likely to be; or whether you have been sincere and faithful in dealing with Christ, and Acceptance of the Terms of the Covenant of Grace, made over, in Him, to true Believers; and that you continue faithful thereto, according to your spiritual Engagement. And in order to your more clear Discovery of your Spiritual Estate, I have next mention'd of such great Gospel and Fundamental Graces as Faith and Repentance, which being inseparably connected with, and always accompanying each other, are the two vital constituent Parts of a Christian, wherein the Sum of the Gospel lieth. These Graces being attended with, and carrying along with them all the other Graces of the Spirit.

I have begun with the Grace of Repentance first, being so follow the former Head of Regeneration. The Truth of which Grace, carefully inquired into and found, will very much tend to the clearing this up to us; and likewise, manifest that saving Evangelical Faith is the highest Root from which that, and all other Graces of the Holy Spirit do proceed; yet it is also certain, that still there is a Sense of Sin in some measure, and of our lost and miserable Condition in our selves thereby, and of our Need of a Saviour to deliver us from it, and from the miserable Fruits and Effects of Sin, we shall not be brought to a saving Acquaintance with Christ by Faith, and an unfeigned Acceptance of him on Gospel Terms, whereby we shall obtain an Interest in the Covenant of Grace, and be intitled to all the Blessings of that Everlasting Covenant, which is well order'd in all things, and sure, and is abundantly sufficient to make Believers who have an Interest in it happy, both in Time and to Eternity: But the Discovery of this Grace of Repentance will clear up to us the Soundness of our Faith, and of all other Graces in us. I have next mention'd, as the Fruits and Effects of *Saving Faith*, the Three-fold Righteousness of *Justification*, *Sanctification*, and a *Holy Conversation*: all which are issuing from that Spring and Root; *Rom. 5. 1. and 8. 30. 1 Tim. 1. 19. James 2. 18.* and will farther

the evidence your Faith to be of a right kind, and wrought with Power in you. But yet, for the Encouragement of weak Believers, I have next treated of Christian *Progress*, which may farther help you in this Inquiry and Trial of your Lives, that the Truth of Grace, tho' in the lowest Degree, may be discovered to your Comfort; and that in those dangerous Rocks both of Presumption and Despair, may be avoided: The gracious Gospel (through the Blessed Mediator) now accepting of Sincerity instead of Perfection, and the Truth of Grace, tho' in the lowest Degree; provided there be an unfeigned Endeavour after its Increase and Perfection (through the Holy Spirit of Grace) And therein are laid down several Marks of Rightness, in order to that Discovery. And if upon Search and Examination of our selves, we find that great and blessed Change is wrought in our Hearts, and that we have the Graces of the Holy Spirit in truth in us, as a farther Means, in order to their Increase and our Growth in Grace, I have treated of *Retrieval and Perseveration*. For where there is found Conversion and Regeneration wrought, tho' that Soul is in a safe and happy Condition, yet there are, and will be (while in this imperfect State) those Reminders of Sin and Corruption in the Heart, which will be continual occasion of Mortification to us; on the account of which, *Prayer* is the Duty our Blessed Lord hath prescribed, in order to the carrying on that great Work of Mortification. For as I have set down some Rules how we may perform that Duty spiritually and profitably, both to our selves and others; and have shewed how we should examine our selves. And that we may not be slighty in that great Business, but be helped thereby to discern the Multitude of our Sins, and the manifold Ways whereby we have offended God, I have set down a *Catalogue* of the Duties commanded; and the Sins forbidden in the Ten Commandments; as also the Sins against the Gospel. Too many that rest satisfy'd in a general Confession of Sin, and say they are Sinners; when they come and profess to humble their Souls, and to confess their Sins in particular, can find few they are guilty of; whereas by comparing their Hearts and Lives with the holy Law of God, in the Strictness, Extent, and Spirituality of it,

THE *English* Dictionary.

43

it may be themselves to be exceeding vile. It is
 thing very unpleasant to Men, to catch their own Con-
 sciences, and to find themselves great Sinners: many
 had rather lie down with a false Peace, than arraign and
 really themselves in this matter. But who, in his right
 Wis, would comfort himself with a Shadow of Re-
 pentance, without finding the Substance and Truth of
 that Grace in his Soul, which his everlasting Welfare de-
 pends so much upon?

This may be of use at all times, but especially when
 we are in a more solemn manner to humble our selves
 before the Lord, for the Sins of our Lives past, before
 our Approach to the *Lord's Table*. And because of the
 impurities of our Hearts, and our unsteadfastness in the
 Covenant, (being prone to wander, backslide, and to de-
 part from God) I have, according to the Advice of some
 serious Christians, recommended to you the frequent re-
 newal of your Baptismal Covenant, and the doing it ex-
 pressly in writing, (by Persons Adult) which Method I find
 recommended by an eminently holy, and judicious
 Minister in the Church of Christ [Mr. *J. Allen*.] And I
 have annexed thereto a Form of such a Covenant drawn
 up by him, which hath been made use of by several so-
 ber Christians. As our first Entrance into this Covenant
 in our Baptism, is essential to Christianity; so our fre-
 quent Reflection thereupon, and renewing of it, upon
 our Falls and Failures therein (especially when they are
 at any time more evident and gross) and upon any spe-
 cial Occasions, is a likely and proper Means for our Com-
 fort, and farther Establishment in that Covenant. And
 the Lord's Supper being instituted as a Seal and Confir-
 mation also of the Covenant of Grace, I have, in the
 next place, treated of that Ordinance, and endeavour'd
 to inform your Judgments concerning the true Nature,
 Intent, and Use of it, and to direct your Practice, that
 you may know how to receive it in a right manner, to
 your spiritual Benefit and Growth in Grace.

In the Third Part, is treated of *Walking with God*,
 and maintaining constant and close Communion with
 him, with some General *Directions* in order thereto,
 particularly, how we should begin the Day with God,
 pouring forth our Souls in secret Prayer and Thanksgiving
 unto him, Private Prayer being the Duty of all, and
 that

that whereby Holiness may be very much promoted. Some Directions are given to prevent Sluggishness and Formality therein, and so offending in the manner of your performing of that Duty. The next Chapter sheweth how the Scriptures, which are the Oracles of God, are to be read constantly and diligently by us, they being able (through the Operation of the Holy Spirit) to make us wise unto Salvation: Also how we should live always as in the sight of God, whose Eye is continually upon us: And that we should live by Faith all times in Him, and in a constant Dependence upon Him, (in and through Christ our Blessed Mediator) eyeing and observing His Providence in all things. Again, how we should practise the great Duty of *Watchfulness*: that we watch over our *Thoughts*, that we entertain not Sin in them, by suffering vain and sinful Thoughts to lodge within us; over our *Affections*, labouring speedily to suppress the sinful motions and stirrings of Sin and Corruption in our hearts: Over our *Words*, that we offend not (which we are very prone to do) with our Tongues: And over our *actions* and outward *Conversations*, that it may be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ. In the next place is shewn, what are the things we must especially watch against. 1. The Sins we are most inclined to by our natural Temper and Constitution. 2. Those Sins we are most exposed to, by reason of our Calling, Condition, and Course of Life. 3. The Sins of the Times and Places where we live. 4. That we may not dishonour God, by the immoderate and undue Use of things in themselves lawful; which (without great Care) we are in great danger of doing. 5. That we watch against Error also in Judgment, the Danger whereof is shewed, and some Preservatives laid down against it. And farther, how we should also watch for any Opportunities of doing or receiving Good; and here some Motives to Watchfulness are propounded. And being our Badaughters alone, without the continual Aid and Assistance of the Holy Spirit, and renewed Strength from above, would not be sufficient for our Performance of those Duties that are incumbent on us; or to enable us to overcome the least of those Temptations we are always liable to, and endangered by, from the World, the Devil, and our own indwelling Corruptions: we should, besides our daily

solemn Prayer, and frequent mental, Speculatory
Prayer unto the Lord, for his Grace, Help, and As-
sistance, and for the Comfort of his Spirit.

The next Chapter treats of Diligence and Conscientious-
ness in our particular Duties and Callings; it being the
Duty of all true Christians, for their own Peace sake,
and that they may adorn the Doctrine of Christ, to serve
their Generation herein, avoiding Idleness, that great
Snare of the Devil. The next treats of keeping Com-
pany, as in the Sight of God, and how to behave our-
selves therein. In all Company, when we are necessarily
conversing, and the Danger of frequent and unnecessary
Conversation with such; whereby many have been overlast-
ingly hindered. They that pray to be delivered from
Temptations, must not wilfully run themselves into
them. And being it is a real Kindness, and an excellent
Expression of true Christian Friendship, to keep one
another off, as much as in us lies, from Misery and De-
struction, and to be Helpers of one another Heaven-
ward. We have next treated of that great and difficult
Duty of Christian and Brotherly Reproof and Admoni-
tion, which if it be prudently and faithfully discharged,
would (through the Blessing of God) conduce much to
the Abatement of Sin in the World, and the Advance-
ment exceedingly of Piety. And then it being that
which a true Christian, when he is not necessarily hin-
dered, and he hath Opportunity for it, is especially de-
sirous of, and delighted in, the Society of the Saints, and
Children of God, some Directions are given, how that
may be improved to the spiritual Benefit and Advantage
of each other. And seeing this may be also very much
promoted by Religious Conference, thereby warming and
inventing, and provoking one another to Love, and to
Good Works, I have next spoken of that Duty, and
set down some Rules concerning it. And further, be-
cause, without Meditation, it's not to be expected we
should reap so much Benefit by the Word, nor that the
Soul should be so thriving in Knowledge and Grace, as
otherwise it might, in the frequent and conscientious
Practice of this Duty, I have endeavoured to shew the
Benefit and Excellency thereof, and set down some Di-
rections concerning it. And lastly, in order to the safe
and comfortable Closing of each Day, before we lie down
upon

upon our Beds to rest, it may be requisite, that every Night we should ~~repose~~, and reflect upon all our ~~actions~~ and whole Behaviour in the Day past; and so set all right between God and our Souls, before we go to sleep. And, in the next place, because the conscientious Use and Improvement of all the Means of Grace that are afforded to us, is our indispensable Duty, in order to our obtaining of, and farther Growth in Knowledge and Grace, the following Chapter treats of the careful Observation of the Lord's Day, shewing, Why we should observe it, and how: The Secrets of Religion and Power of Godliness, depending so much upon the religious and conscientious Observance of that Day.

Also a faithful and diligent Attendance upon the Ordinances is treated of: and therein Directions are given, How we are to prepare our selves before we go to hear; how to behave our selves in the time of Hearing; and what we are to do after our Attendance upon them. The neglect of due Preparation may be one great Reason, why Preaching is no more profitable and successful.

The next Chapter containeth the Duties of Governors of Families; which (tho at present you are not yet) being you may hereafter stand in that Relation, I have herein treated of it. There is a great Duty lies upon such, and greater than they are ordinarily aware of. They may be exceeding instrumental to the Salvation of those under their Care, if they discharge their Duties as they ought: but through their Neglect of the Worship of God in their Houses, and their unexemplary and vicious Lives, they prove too often an Occasion of the Ruin of many in their Families.

I have next mention'd the Duties of those other several Relations wherein you do, or may any of you hereafter stand, in order to the awakening and encouraging you to a faithful Discharge of those Duties that are incumbent upon you. It is an usual Note and Observation, that Persons are not, nor can justly be accounted truly Religious, any farther than they approve themselves faithful and conscientious in the due Performance of Relative Duties. Lastly, considering that the whole Life of a Christian is to be laying in Provision, and making a diligent Preparation for his great and everlasting Change by Death, I have treated of ~~such~~ to which

The *Swift* Dictionary

XX

which are so continually incident, and which is usually the forerunner of Death: that whenever Sickness and Distempers come, we may labour to make a right Improvement of them, in order to our being farther prepared for those last things, which are to be consequent thereupon; *Death*, *Judgment*, and an *Eternal State*, either of Happiness or Misery; in which we must all of us, in a short time, be unalterably lodged: that we may have an Eye thereto, throughout the whole Course of our Pilgrimage here in the World, and that Eternity may have its due Influence upon us in all that we do.

Thus, dear Children, I have given you a short Draught of what is contained in the following Book, which shall be followed with my poor Prayers, that it may be very useful to you. You see the Plot and Design I have upon you: is it so innocent a Nature, that you have no reason in the World to go about to defeat me in it. It is your Eternal Salvation that I am so greatly concerned for; and that true Piety and Religion may be continued amongst you. That where you have not yet closed with the Terms of this Blessed *Covenant*, which is chiefly the Subject of the First Part of this Treatise, you may be savingly wrought upon, and brought (through Divine Grace) to an hearty and unfeigned Consent to them; that sound Conversion may be wrought in every one of you; and that where that saving Work of Grace is, or shall hereafter be wrought in any of your Hearts, it may be carried on daily; and that you may increase and abound more and more in the Fruits of Holiness and Righteousness, to the Praise and Glory of God. Tho you are all now so young, yet I intreat you to consider, it will be but a very little time comparatively, even to the youngest of you, before your Souls will be fixed where they must continue for ever. Let me therefore be the more importunate with you, to work out your Salvation now, while you have time: And as you ever hope to enjoy the glorious Presence of God hereafter, let what you shall find written in this Treatise, be carefully read and sink into your Hearts; to which end, let me further add these few following Directions.

1. To be not in any *Spiritual Duty*, or the Concerns of your Souls; they are Immortal, and you have to deal with an infinite Majesty: remember you go upon Life and

and Death, therefore let us be very serious, and do all to God in a serious and spiritual manner: who will look and looks especially at that, and is in all that we do. Therefore when you think of Him, love Him, pray to Him, or any way make your Address to his great Majesty, be in good Grace, and have Peace, and you have all. More particularly, make use of your Interest in Christ, (as the only way to the Father) and in the Covenant of Grace, in and through Him: so that be well acquainted with the Nature of the Covenant, and the Terms of it; be diligent in the Use of all God appointed Means, in order to your obtaining an Interest therein, through the Blessed Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ; and give not over, give no Rest to your Soul, till you have got some well grounded Hope, that you and that in and through Him, God is now become your God in that Everlasting Covenant, and your Portion for ever, as he is, and will be the God and Portion of all his People.

II. Carefully distinguish between the End and the Means. Your End in Religion, is to attain Reconciliation with God, in and through Christ, to attain a new Frame of Spirit; to enjoy God, and his Communion with Him; to fear Him, love Him, and to have your Natures conformed to Him. The Means to be used, are the Performance of such religious Duties and Offices, as God hath appointed, for the attaining of this End. Now if we rest in the Means, in a bare Performance of these Duties, without desiring to be bettered by them towards God, and to enjoy God in them, and to have our Hearts brought into a better Frame, and more in Conformity to his Holy Will, that Grace and Holiness may be strengthened and promoted in us, aiming at those higher Ends to which they were appointed, our Duties are rather a mocking of God, than a true and sincere worshipping of Him. It will not advantage us, nor be of the true Religion, if we be mighty and fervent only in the Duties of it, resting in the Outward and bare Performance of them; like heathen therefore of having a Form of Godliness, and denying of secretly having the Power thereof.

III. Be very careful you take not up with mere *Professing*, and a *far* outward *Conversacion*. This is

very

very commendable and necessary, but it is not sufficient to Salvation. Without Regeneration and true Conversion (tho' Faith in our blessed Redeemer) there is no Salvation to be expected. Let those that thus rest and depend themselves in their own Righteousness, seeing they say they have defrauded none, but given every one their due; let them consider what ground they have to build upon from chance. Do they give God his due? They owe their Hearts to him, they owe sincere Obedience and spiritual Worship to him, they are bound to love him above all; to delight in Communion with him, and to make conscience of all the Duties that he imposes; that they be found in Christ; by whom alone they can perform any Duties acceptably to him; that all their Thoughts and Affections be watch'd over, and brought into a Conformity to him, together with their Words and Actions, that all may be made agreeable to his holy Will: their whole Life ought to be a living unto God, and his Glory ought to be their great End and Aim in all their Undertakings.

IV. Pray therefore earnestly to the Lord, that you may be rooted and establish'd in the Truth, and be preserv'd from Error; (1.) Of Judgement, from the Truth of God. (2.) Of Affection, from the Ordinances of God. (3.) Of Conversation, from that sober, humble, and circumspect Walking which all true Christians should make conscience of. He is the right Soldier, who is not discourag'd by those that run away, but who still presseth on to Victory. Lay not out your Zeal in external Observances, that are of human institution only; in the Worship of God, and that have no Warrant from the Scripture; but look to it, that your Love to God, his Truths, and Children, to all that bear his Image (tho' they may differ from you in some Circumstances and lesser Matters in Religion) be sincere and fervent. If they have his Mark and Seal upon them, if they hold the Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and are found in the Fundamentals of Christianity, and the Doctrine of the Gospel; think them not unworthy of your high Esteem and Affection: and let your daily Care be about the right ordering and governing of your own Hearts and Affections, to mortify Sin

in your selves more and more, and to advance Grace and Holiness in your selves and others.

V. Having gotten some comfortable Evidence, and that you can hope, upon Scripture-Grounds, that you are indeed ingrafted into Christ, and that you are within the Covenant of Grace; having a saving Change wrought in you by his Holy Spirit, be still adding to your Evidence; and take heed of whatsoever would tend to the darkening of them, and do all to God as to your Father, your reconcil'd God and Father in Christ.

VI. Be constant in *your Duties*; and whatsoever Calling it may please the Lord by his Providence to fix you in, let Religion go through it, and be acted in all the Parts of it. Seek not to get a Name of forward Persons in espousing this or that Party; but endeavour to be thorough and serious in your Profession of Religion, which is not a Name or Notion, but a Frame of Nature and Habit of Living by Divine Rule: What it is, you will best know, when you have it in Truth first, and in Power next, and not before. It's that you must live and die by, and rule and reign by. And therefore let me give you this Advice; Labour to be more than you seem to be, and to do more than you talk of in it, and to satisfy your own Consciences in all that you do.

VII. Count those your best *Friends*, that lovingly and faithfully admonish you of any *Sin* or *Evil* they see you going on in; as you would that Person who saw you going ignorantly into a House infected with the Plague, and pluck'd you back, acquainting you with the Danger.

VIII. Watch and strive in an especial manner for those Graces which concern your *Place* and *Condition*, in which Providence hath at present, or shall hereafter call you; and make head especially against those Sins to which your natural Temper and Constitution may most incline you. In particular, strive against *Melancholy*; if you perceive any Inclination to it, and Danger of its growing to an excess, and prevailing over you, check it betimes, so far as you find it dorn so: It's that which I have my self long experienc'd to be in my own Temper, and which you may probably have also an Inclination to. This may in some respects be useful, if kept under and within due bounds; but is exceeding dangerous when it exceeds them. It is (as one observes) an Humour that admits

of any Temptation, and is capable of any Impression; working to all Unthankfulness against God; Unrighteousness to Man; and Unnaturalness to our selves; and in these respects to be the more carefully watch'd and striven against. And in order thereto, (1.) Avoid all immoderate Passions of Sorrow, Fear, and Anger, as much as may be; and all Occasions, Discontent and Grief. (2.) Use frequent and constant Exercise, tho' not too violent. (3.) Avoid much Solitariness, and be most commonly in some cheerful Company; yet such as may help and further, and no way hinder you in your great Concern. Do not as the foolish Sinners of the World do, to drink away Melancholy; nor associate your selves with sensual, vain, and unprofitable Persons, that will draw you deeper into Sin, and make the Trouble and the Distemper much more dangerous and deadly than that you complain of, instead of healing it; and multiply your Grief and Sorrow, when you come to look back, and reflect again upon your sinful Loss of Time. But let your Society and Converse be with the more cheerful sort of pious, solid, and serious Christians, chiefly and most ordinarily. There is no Mirth like the Mirth of Believers, which Faith fetcheth from the Blood of Christ, and from those Treasures of Blessings promis'd and made over to us in the Covenant of Grace, and from those Springs of Mercy, which from thence are continually flowing, out to Believers. Labour therefore to get and strengthen more and more your Evidences of a saving Interest in, and Union to the Lord Jesus Christ; rest not satisfy'd with any thing short thereof. Make sure of him, and you have the Field in which all those Treasures are hid: be diligent in the Use of all his appointed Means in order to your obtaining this, and all is yours. You will then be intitled to all those great and precious Promises which God hath made over in him to his People; those unspeakably great and invaluable Blessings of the Covenant, which are every way sufficient to make you truly happy and blessed, both here and to Eternity. Let Christ be truly precious to you, and All of Him; labour to get more and more into him; and being his, you may be assur'd you shall never want any thing that infinite Wisdom can contrive, or that infinite Power and Goodness can supply you with, to render your Condition safe and happy,

back for Time and to Eternity. ^{Ps. 138. 8.} ^{1st} I have heard of Presumptions against our Father and Mother
Walking with God. The Lord preserves you from such
fracture and mad Opinion of the World; that likes not
serving God so much, nor making so much ado to be
loved. Can any thing in the world better deserve your
Care and Diligence, or pay you better for it? And value
your Souls of the greatest value; and far beyond all the
Concerns of Time, and of these perishing Bodies. And
all People think the Way of Religion a melancholy and
sad Way; but it is a Truth I shall not spare to affirm;
and can assure them of, they will never live so truly
quiet, peaceable, and comfortable Life, till they are by
converting Grace brought home to God, and into the
Bonds of that everlasting Covenant made over in Christ
to Believers; and have engaged their Hearts in all being
holy walking with him. They ignorantly fly from
serious Religion and Godliness, as from Sorrow and
Tribulation; but they fly indeed from Joy, and Pleasure;
and Delight, and the most solid and abiding Peace, Con-
fort, and Satisfaction. See ^{Prov. 3. 7.} For my own
part I can assure you, and I desire to speak it to the
praise of free, infinitely free Grace; that as soon as the
Lord was pleased thereby to work upon my Heart (which
was before restless in the pursuit of Creature Enjoy-
ments, and in seeking Rest and Satisfaction therein,
where it was not to be found; and to show me where it
lay, in his blessed Will, it was then matter of Grief and
Sorrow to me, that I had lost so much time as I had
done before in Vanity, and had not a more hearty Ac-
quaintance with the Things and Ways of God, wherein
he found the greatest and most substantial Delight and Sa-
tisfaction was to be enjoyed. The Doubts and Fears I
sometimes had of losing again the Sense of his Love and
Favour, which I had before in some measure felt (tho a
Creature so unworthy of it as I was); and when at any
time under the hidings of his Face, was that which I
hope I can truly say, occasion'd my greatest Grief and
Sorrow for his Favour, I found, was better than Life,
and the abiding Apprehension of his Displeasure (which
sin procures) is worse than Death. For what indeed can
bring disquiet and cause dejection on that Soul that is
in Christ, and interested in his everlasting Righteousness,
and

and Covenant Blessings; who is kept out of the power of Satan, and is freed from the Wrath of God, and the Danger of everlasting Misery, which hangs over the head of every unbelieving and unrepentant Sinner. Let not therefore those Scoorns and Reproaches of ignorant and wicked Men discourage you: He that hath good ground to believe he shall live for ever with God, in his Favour, and be possessor of that eternal Glory and Happiness which he has laid up for his People; may (now and then) well rejoice in his Portion, and must be acknowledg'd to be a happy Person, by every one that hath not lost his Reason and Understanding. There is a time coming, when the proudest and most obstinate Sinner will be glad to change his Condition with the meanest Saint. Let those that have entertain'd any Prejudice against Religion, or had Thoughts of the Ways of Godliness, but make the trial what a holy Life is; and if they find not more solid Peace and Satisfaction in serious turning unto God, and a sincere Endeavour to approve their Hearts to him, than ever they did in the Ways of Sin, let them then change their Course again: but that can never be. *Revel. 9. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*

22. Nourish and maintain a Tenderness of Conscience; be very circumspect in your daily walking; look upon Sin as the greatest Evil, and make up every Breach between God and your Soul betimes; and to that end, disregard not the least Departure or Deviations from God and his Word; pray carefully for the Guidance and Conduct of his Holy Spirit; and to be kept from whatsoever would allure and draw your Heart from him.

23. When it shall please the Lord to settle you in, and give you the Government of a Family, take care of all that shall be under your charge; that true Piety and Godliness may be countenanc'd, encourag'd, and promoted. Let your Houses be *Babels*, Houses of God; and not *Babylons*, Houses of Wickedness; and let good *Joseph's* Resolution be yours, which you may see *Joseph. 24. 18.* (In the close of that Verse.) But if you neglect Family Duties, the Religious Observation of the Lord's Day, Catechizing, or other private Instruction; and so let those under your Care continue in Ignorance, Profaneness, and Ungodliness; how can you think to answer it to God, when he shall call for you? Let me now there-

Therefore faithfully warn you of the Sin and Danger of such Neglect. And if the Lord shall continue you to the World, and bless you with Children, let it be your Care to bring them up faithfully for him: observe their Tempers, and what way will best suit them, and be most conducing to their great End. Make it your chief Care to get them ingrafted into Christ; and that they may be truly goodly, and useful in their Generation. Spare not in giving them good Education; and if Grace make no difference, do you make none in your Affections, Countenances, nor too much in their Portions, where there is not a special Ground and Occasion for it: Partiality therein usually ending in Envy, Strangeness, &c.

Lastly, Labour to maintain Peace and Love amongst your selves, both whilst you are together, and when Providence shall part you one from another: *Mark 6. 30.* Labour to get your Hearts season'd with the Graces of Humility, Self-denial, and true Brotherly and Christian Love. Let there be no Heart-burnings, Contentions, Brawlings, Backbitings, Envyings, or Defamings heard of among you; be as helpful as you can one to another in the best things, and encourage one another in the ways of Godliness. Imitate, ~~that~~ which is good, wherever you see it, but learn evil of none; abhor to draw or entice one another to any sinful Course or Practice; do all Offices of Kindness one for another, and live together in an undivided Band of Love. And when you shall be separated from each other, let not any Strangeness grow between you, but continue to visit (as you conveniently may) to comfort, counsel, help, and admonish one another; that you may experience the Blessing mention'd in *Psal. 133.* As you have opportunity, let it be your endeavour to do good to all; but not knowingly or willingly to hurt or do injury to any. Learn that difficult Lesson, of forgiving Wrongs and Injuries, and praying for and wishing well to those that are your Enemies: this, God's Spirit can teach and enable you to do; and remember our blessed Saviour's words, *Mat. 6. 14, 15.* *If ye forgive Men their Trespases, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not Men their Trespases, neither will your Father forgive your Trespases.* And the Apostle's Words, *Col. 3. 12, 13, 14.* [let these sink into your Minds, and forget not to practise them daily]

The Epistle Dedicatory

XXIII

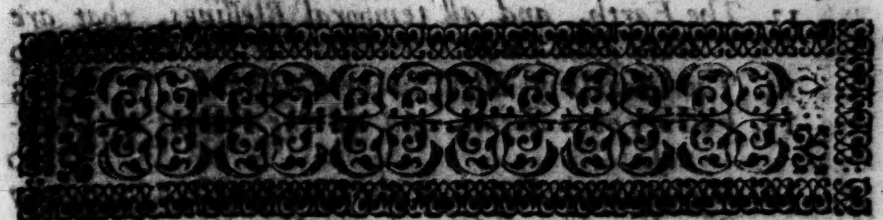
Put on, therefore (as the Elect of God Holy and Beloved) *Rapels of Mercy, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another. If any Man hath a Quarrelling heart against any, even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on Charity, which is the Bond of Perfection, and let the Peace of God rule in your Hearts, to which also ye are called, in one Body, and be ye thankful. To which let me add that Exhortation with which the Apostle is about to close his Epistle, Phil. 4. 8. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any Virtue, if there be any Praise, think on these things.*

And thus, my dear Children, I shall close these Lines with my most earnest Request to you all once again, That you will seriously and diligently read, and consider, and labour to put in practice what I have written in this and in the following Sheets; and as (I can, I hope sincerely say) an hearty Desire of your eternal Happiness put me upon the writing of them, so that they may (through the Lord's Blessing upon my poor Endeavours to bring these Truths into your hands) be made successful to you; and that you may shew forth the Fruit of them continually in your Practice, to the Furtherance of your present and eternal Peace and Consolation in Christ; is, and shall (whilst I remain in this Tabernacle) be the earnest Prayer of

Your Affectionate Grandfather.

March 27.
1715.

DAN. DISNEY.



THE

CONTENTS

Of the Several

CHAPTERS.

PART I.

<i>Prefatory Discourse concerning the great Duty of Consideration.</i>	pag. 1
Chap. 1. <i>Of the Existence of God, his Nature, and Divine Attributes.</i>	12
2. <i>Of the Trinity.</i>	31
3. <i>Of the Covenant of Works made with Man, and Man's Apostacy from God.</i>	34
4. <i>Of the Covenant of Grace, and our Redemption by Christ.</i>	39
5. <i>Of the Foundation of the Covenant of Grace, viz. the Covenant of Redemption.</i>	66
6. <i>Of Christ the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace.</i>	71
7. <i>The great Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant of Grace.</i>	80
8. <i>God the Father in the Covenant.</i>	82
9. <i>Christ in the Covenant.</i>	88
10. <i>The Holy Spirit in the Covenant.</i>	104
11. <i>Free Remission of Sins, and Justification in the Covenant.</i>	113

23	Chap. 8. Of being ready to answer for the Faith	445
22	9. Of Watchfulness in the Heart, and all Temporal Things	448
21	10. Of Watchfulness in the Tongue	450
20	11. Of Watchfulness in the Feet	454
19	12. Of Watchfulness over our Words	458
18	13. Of Watchfulness over our Actions	465
17	14. Of being ready to answer for the Faith	468
16	15. Of the Terms of the Covenant	478
15	16. Of the Things for which we are to be upon our Watch	484
14	17. Of Diligence in our particular Callings	512
13	18. Of keeping Company as in the sight of God	518
12	19. In ill Company	527
11	20. Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof	528
10	21. In good Company	533
9	22. Of stated Christian Conference	536
8	23. Of reverend Holy Meditation	540
7	24. Of Repasts and Recreation	543
6	25. How to close the Day with God	546
5	26. Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day	550
4	27. Of Hearing the Word	564
3	28. Of fasting and Prayer	571
2	29. Of Family Government	577
1	30. Of the Duties of Husband and Wife	586
	31. Of the Duties of Parents and Children	593
	32. Of the Duties of Masters and Servants	602
	33. Of the Duties of such as are in Office, and of Inferiours	608
	34. Of the Duties of People towards their Ministers	610
	35. Directions to the Ministry, and the Sick	613
	36. Of the Last Judgment	622
	37. Of the Resurrection and the glorious State of the Damned	628
	38. Of the blessed State of the Saints	630
	39. Of the blessed State of the Saints	639

The Contents

Chap. 8.	Of going and observing the Providence of God.	447
9.	Of Watchfulness.	448
10.	Of Watchfulness over our Thoughts.	450
11.	Of Watchfulness over our Affections.	452
12.	Of Watchfulness over our Words.	458
13.	Of Watchfulness over our Actions.	462
14.	Of the Things we must more especially watch against.	468
15.	Some other particulars respecting and necessary to be especially watched against.	484
16.	Of the Things for which we are to be upon our Watch.	512
17.	Of Diligence in our particular Calling.	518
18.	Of keeping Company in the Sight of God.	521
19.	In ill Company.	525
20.	Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof.	528
21.	In good Company.	533
22.	Of sacred Christian Conference.	536
23.	Of reverend Holy Meditation.	540
24.	Of Repose and Recreation.	543
25.	How to close the Day with God.	546
26.	Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.	550
27.	Of Hearing the Word.	564
28.	Of Reading of Scripture.	571
29.	Of Family Government.	575
30.	Of the Duties of Husband and Wife.	586
31.	Of the Duties of Parents and Children.	593
32.	Of the Duties of Masters and Servants.	602
33.	Of the Duties of such as are in Office, and of Inferiours.	608
34.	Of the Duties of People towards their Administrators.	610
35.	Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick.	613
36.	Of Death.	622
37.	Of the Last Judgment.	628
38.	Of Hell, and the dreadful State of the Damned therein.	640
39.	Of Heaven, and the blessed State of the Saints therein.	649

Prefatory Discourse

Concerning the Great Duty of

CONSIDERATION.

THERE are three things (as is found by wo-
ful Experience) that are the great Ruiners
and Destroyers of the Soul: *viz.* (1.) Want
of Consideration and Self-Reflection. (2.)
Infidelity. (3.) Earthly-mindedness: but
especially the first of them. For if Persons would some-
times bestow an Hour in serious Thoughts, and soberly
consider (in their Retirement) how they have spent
their time, and what they have been doing in the
World; What Covenant it is they are yet under;
Whether it is God they have been serving; Heaven
they have been seeking; and Holiness and Righteousness
they have been practising; and whether they have lived
for the Work and End for which they were created:
Would they seriously consider, how the Case stands be-
tween God and their Souls; whether they are in the
State of Nature, in which they were born, or in a State
of Grace; in a State of Peace with God, and in Cove-
nant with him, or under Wrath: and whether that

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great

great Change of Conversion and Regeneration hath passed upon them or no: I say, if they would but now and then seriously consider of these things, and commune with their own Hearts about them; I cannot think but there would be many more wrought upon, and brought home to God, than now we see there are. The truth is, the great reason that so many Men and Women in the world are no better, is, because they will not consider, and ask themselves this one short Question, What am I? In what case stand I towards God? The generality of People live so securely, and at such a careless rate, that they will not trouble themselves about these matters, that so nearly concern them. The Cares and Businesses, the Pleasures and Profits of this Life, do so wholly engross their Hearts and employ their Heads, that the Concernments of their precious and immortal Souls, and the things of the other Life are not minded by them. And hence it is that the Labours of faithful Ministers are so unsuccessful, the serious Advice of Parents is no more regarded, and all the Means of Grace, and Methods of God for the reclaiming of Sinners, affect no more, and operate no better, because People will not consider; they will not mind nor regard what is their true Interest, and most certainly tends to their Good, and what doth apparently tend to their Hurt and Ruin.

Hence it is that so many Men and Women continue so wicked, so worldly, so sensual, so unreasonable, so unpersuadable; they will not consider whither such Courses tend. And in short, hence it is that the serious and weighty Matters of Religion, on which Life or Death depends, are so slighted and disesteem'd; hence it is that so many millions of People live as Persons unconcern'd, whether there be a God or Devil, Heaven or Hell, eternal Joys or everlasting Torments: I say, there cannot be render'd any more proper reason of this monstrous Stupidity than this; the Children of Men will not consider: tho' this being the Command of the great God, it is their great and indispensable Duty, as well as their highest Interest so to do; *Hag. 1. 5, 7.* "Methinks I should hardly despair (says the Worthy Mr. Cradock) of any Person that lives under the Sound of the Gospel, whom I could persuade to a serious and frequent Practice of that Duty." And because it is a Duty of

the Duty of Consideration.

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so great importance, and may with God's Blessing be of so great use and benefit, I shall speak more distinctly of it under several Particulars.

There are several things I would advise you seriously to consider of. In order to your more speedy and effectual Search and Tryal of your selves;

1. Consider the glorious Nature of God, to whom you are to give account of your selves. He is a God of infinite Holiness, and knows perfectly all our Ways. All our Sins are before him; yea, *our secret Sins in the Light of his Countenance.*

2. Consider in what a blessed Condition God made Man at first, and for what excellent Ends; viz. to glorify, honour, and obey him. And as this was Man's Duty, so it would have been his great Happiness if he had perform'd it.

3. Consider whether you are now in that excellent Estate of Holiness and Blessedness in which God made Man; or whether you are not now degenerated, become vile and sinful; and have not answer'd the End of your Creation; nor lived to the Honour of God, your Creator, Redeemer, and great Benefactor, as you should have done.

4. Consider how grievously you have sinned, and how many thousand ways you have offended and provok'd God. Think of your manifold Omissions, and Neglects of the Duties requir'd of you. Think of your manifold Commissions of Sin, and high Violations of God's holy and righteous Law. Few People reckon one Sin of many they are guilty of, and consider that whilst they are in their Sins and an impenitent State, the Wrath of God abideth on them: *God is angry with the Wicked every day.* Psal. 7. 11. You are not only without all Covenant Blessings, but under the Wrath and Curse of God continually, even in this World; and you are liable to eternal Punishments, whenever you shall be call'd hence. And now ask your selves seriously, whether this be a Condition for any Person, not void of Reason, to rest in, and be quiet under. Surely, were all unconverted Persons sufficiently sensible of the Danger and Misery of the State they are in, they would make as much haste out of it, as a Man would out of an House that was on fire over his head.

5. Consider, if upon search you find your selves yet unregenerate, yet your Case is not desperate and remediless, if you be not perverse and wilful. God hath appointed a blessed Way and Course in the Gospel for your Recovery, if you be willing to embrace his gracious Offer to come into this blessed Covenant, and be converted to him. He hath given his Son to be a Propitiation, and a Sacrifice for Sin: and he is an All-sufficient Saviour, *able to save you to the uttermost*. Heb. 2.5. able to work your Peace and Reconciliation with God; able to remove both the Guilt of all your Sins, by his Merits and Intercession; and able to destroy the Power and Dominion of Sin in you, by his Grace and sanctifying Spirit; and bring you to eternal Happiness. And as he is able, so he is most ready and willing to be your Saviour, if you will accept of him upon such fair and reasonable Terms, as he offers himself upon in the Gospel.

6. Consider what those Terms are on which Christ offers Salvation, in case you have not yet sincerely clos'd with and embrac'd them. He requires we should be sensible of our Sins, and truly humbled for them; that we should see the Odiousness, and loath the Filthiness of them; and with Grief of Heart confess and forsake them, and turn unto the Lord. He requires that we should understandingly and solemnly now give up our whole selves to Christ, and accept of him as our Lord and Saviour, authoriz'd and sent of God, to make Atonement for Sin, and to deliver us from the Guilt of it, and the Thralldom and Dominion thereof, from the Power of Satan, and all our spiritual Enemies. He requires we should come to him, and wholly rest and depend on him for the performing all this for us and in us; all his three Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King, being suited and fitted to help us in these our Necessities. Consider therefore, I say, and examine your selves whether ever you have clos'd with Christ sincerely on these Terms or no, according to his Covenant of Grace; and have given up your selves to him, as your holy Head and Husband, to be justify'd by his Blood, to be sanctify'd, rul'd, and guided by his Holy Spirit, and at last to be brought by him to eternal Happiness. If you have not hitherto done it, think with your self whether there be any reason imaginable, why you should not now, even

The Duty of Consideration.

in this hour (without delaying any longer) be willing to do it, and enter into Covenant with him.

7. Consider (besides what has been already said for your great encouragement) the inexpressible Happiness of all those that do really and cordially close with Christ on his own Terms, giving up themselves to him in this Covenant.

(1.) Hereby they become real Members of him, and are made Partakers of his Righteousness and Holy Spirit: God is their God. *1 Cor. 12. 12. Eph. 1. 22, 23.*

(2.) They are justify'd and acquitted from the Guilt of all their Sins. *Rom. 8. 1.*

(3.) They become hereby the adopted Children of God. *John 1. 12.*

(4.) All the Promises and Blessings of the Covenant of Grace belong to them. *Psal. 84. 11.*

(5.) Peace of Conscience, and Joy in the Holy Ghost, is their Portion. *Rom. 5. 1, 2.*

(6.) Their Duties and Services are accepted. *Prov. 15. 8. Heb. 11. 4, 5.*

(7.) They are under the Guardianship of the holy Angels. *Heb. 1. 14. Psal. 34. 7.*

(8.) They are in a safe Condition to die: Death is theirs. *1 Cor. 15. 56, 57.*

(9.) They are assured of a blessed Resurrection. *John 5. 28, 29.*

(10.) They shall with Christ judg the World. *1 Cor. 6. 2, 3.*

(11.) They shall be eternally happy with Saints and Angels in Heaven. *Mar. 25. 21, 34, 46.*

8. Consider the woful and inexpressible Misery of all unconverted Persons, whilst they so continue. Certainly no Person that was ever truly converted would be in his unconverted Estate again for all the World. For,

(1.) All their Sins are unpardon'd, and stand upon their own score. *Mark 4. 12.*

(2.) They are under the Wrath and Curse of God. *John 3. ult.*

(3.) They are Bond-slaves to Satan, and employ'd daily in his Service against the Lord. *Acts 26. 18. Eph. 2. 2.*

(4.) Their Prayers and best Services are abominable in the sight of God. *Prov. 28. 9. Amos 5. 21, 22.*

(5.) They are in continual danger of eternal Damnation. *Ezek. 33. 8.*

(6.) The longer they go on in this Course, the more they harden their Hearts, multiply their Sins, and render their Conversion the more difficult. *Rom. 2. 4, 5.*

(7.) Their Account will be heavier, and their Punishment greater, if they die in this Condition, because of the Means of Grace that were afforded to them. *Mat. 11. 21, 22.*

9. Consider who are they that desire your Conversion, and who are they that oppose it and are against it. God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, all good Angels, all glorify'd Saints, all faithful Ministers, all good and gracious Men and Women in the World, desire the Conversion of Sinners. God the Father solemnly declares, *As I live, saith the Lord, I delight not in the Death of a Sinner.* God the Son came into the World for this very end and purpose, to save Sinners; and invites all that are weary and heavy-laden with their Sins to come unto him, promising them Ease and Rest. God the Holy Ghost, by his blessed Motions and Inspirations, persuades and draws the Hearts of Sinners to leave their Sins, and to come unto Christ, that by him they may have Life. The holy Angels rejoice at the Conversion of a Sinner; All faithful Ministers desire and endeavour with all their hearts the Conversion of Sinners: All such Governours of Families as are gracious Persons themselves, earnestly desire and labour after the Conversion of those that are under their care. In a word, all good People in the World are for your Conversion, would rejoice in it, and be glad of it. Now consider who they are that are against it: The Devil indeed will oppose it, with all his might and main. He cannot endure any Soul should escape out of his power; he cannot endure they should forsake their Sins, for thereby they break his Bands asunder, and cast his Cords (by which he held them fast) away from them. Therefore no wonder if he bestirs himself to hinder the Conversion of Sinners. And wicked Men do usually imitate the Devil in this also; for they not having had any experience of a Work of Grace upon their own Hearts, nor understanding what belongs to the new Birth (that supernatural Change) nor having ever tasted the Peace and Comfort of a converted State,

but

but having their Hearts freight with the Love of Sin and the World (in which they take a Delight and Pleasure) 'tis not to be wondred at, if they distaste Repentance, Conversion, and Holiness, as that which is too strict and severe a Course for them. I say, If we consider that there is in wicked Men and Women such a Frame of Heart, we are not to wonder if they desire not the Conversion of others: nay, can we wonder if they oppose it and dislike it every where; and either account all those to be Hypocrites that pretend unto it, or else scrupulous Persons that make more ado than needs, and than God requires of them? (And there being a serpentine Malice and Enmity against the Seed of Christ, rooted in the very Natures of wicked Men (which is by Custom in Sin increas'd to more Malignity) can it be any great matter of Wonder, that they should hate and malign those whom Christ hath chosen out of the World, and call'd home to himself, and gather'd into his Church, by a true and sound Conversion? Thus you see who are for your Conversion, and who are against it. Now consider, to which of these two Parties (if you will act rationally) you ought most to incline.

10. Consider in which of these two Estates you would chuse to die; either in a Converted or Unconverted State: and be not so foolish to abide still in that State, in which you would not be willing to be found at Death, for all the World.

11. If you delay and put off your Repentance and Conversion, and think to take care about your Soul, hereafter, consider, Whether you are sure of another Opportunity of turning unto God, or of another Gale of Grace from the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God will not always strive with the Children of Men, Gen. 6. 3.

12. Consider if you go on in an unconverted State, neglecting Christ, and Salvation, and Heaven, for the Love of the World, and a few short and sinful Pleasures here, (notwithstanding all the Calls of Grace, the blessed Motions of the Spirit of God, the Counsel of Friends, and faithful Ministers) whether you will have any thing to plead for your selves, when you come to be arraign'd at God's Tribunal.

113. And lastly, if after all this, you will still go on in your Sins, and continue in an unconverted State, consider how impossible it is, you should escape the Damnation of Hell, and the Wrath that is to come. *Mat. 23. 33.* *Thyself, 1. 10.*

These and such things are the weighty Matters I would advise you to consider of. *2dly*, I come now to give you some Directions as to the Manner how you should set about, and perform this Duty.

1. Do not stay till such Thoughts and Meditations as these (now mention'd) will come of themselves into your Minds, but set some time apart, and contrive some convenient Retirement and Recess from worldly Business, on purpose to consider of these Matters, that so you may not be disturb'd nor diverted.

I have heard of a Gentleman (says the worthy Mr. *Cnudock*) that upon his Death-bed laid this one Command upon his wild Son, and engag'd him to the Performance of it by a solemn Promise, *That he should every Day of his Life be half an Hour alone*: Which this young Man constantly observing, and spending his *half Hour's Retirement* (at first) in any kind of vain Thoughts, at last began to ponder with himself, Why his Father should enjoin him this Penance? and the Spirit of God suggesting to him, that his Intent therein could be no other, but to bring him to consider of his Ways, and whither they tended, and what would become of him hereafter, if he went on; it pleas'd the Lord to set those Thoughts so home upon his Heart, that he became a New Man. Which one Instance may teach us how advantageous a Duty serious Consideration is, and how they that desire to be really Religious, had need frequently to retire themselves from the Cares and Businesses of this Life, and examine how the Case stands between God and their Souls.

2. Beg of God to affect your Hearts, and to work upon them, by his Holy Spirit, whilst you are considering and discoursing with your selves upon such important Matters.

3. Give not over till you find some good Effect produc'd in you, upon your considering these things; *Deut. 32. 46.*

This is the End of all that has been spoken hitherto,

thereto, to bring you to set upon tutoring and making use of God's Means, in order to your Conversion (if you are yet in an unconverted State:) you may be eternally happy, if you do not wilfully refuse the Means of your Recovery. Then it is you have consider'd to purpose, when you are come to some good Resolutions within your selves thereupon; *Deut. 30. 19. Jer. 9. 16.* when by considering the State of your Souls, you come to see your selves (whilst unregenerate) in a lost Condition by reason of Sin, and that Christ is the only Physician that can cure you, and thereupon resolve speedily to go to him, to delay no longer, but even then, at that very time, to give up your selves to him, and to date your blessed Change from that very day. Then your Consideration produces a good and kindly Effect, and abundantly recompenses all your Labour. One sober Hour so employ'd, may be the happiest Hour that ever you spent, and give you more Comfort at your last Hour, than all the former Hours of your Life.

Now to press and engage you to the Performance of this Duty, consider,

1. It is a Duty you may perform if you will: what hinders but you may go alone, retire your selves into your Chambers, and consider of those weighty things beforemention'd? And there is great reason to hope, would you set about it in good earnest, God would come in with his Blessing, and that his Holy Spirit would so affect your Hearts, and suggest such things to you, and bring you to such new Resolutions, that you would rejoice and bless his Holy Name, that ever you follow'd this Advice.

2. 'Tis a Duty you ought to perform. To what end have you the Faculty of Reason given you, if you will not use and exercise it? God hath given to every Man the first and principal Care and Charge of himself, and his own Salvation. A Man's own Heart is the Vineyard he should be daily dressing, and carefully looking to; but it is strange to see what a Depravation and Degeneracy Sin hath brought upon the Soul of Man. We may observe in all Creatures a Principle of Self-preservation, and an Instinct or secret powerful Principle, rooted in their Natures, by the God of Nature, to resist and oppose the things that tend to their Destruction. But how

little

little doth the Soul of fallen Man act by this Principle? The Soul indeed contrives for the Ease, Pleasure, and sensual Satisfaction of the Body. The Understanding does stretch it self, and devise all ways that the Body may be fed, preserv'd, supported, defended, comforted, and kept (as much as is possible) from all such things, as tend to its Ruin and Dissolution. But how little does the Soul contrive for its own Happiness, or consider its own proper Interest? How little does it discern, or will it mind what is really good, and what is really hurtful to itself? How little is the Understanding and immortal Spirit of Man solicitous about its own Restauration and Peace with God? How little does it design its own true Happiness, solid Peace, and Comfort here, or to secure its everlasting Welfare hereafter? Can there be a more evident Demonstration of the great Degeneracy and Depravedness of the Soul than this is? We see then how much we ought to excite our Reason to consider of those things that tend to our eternal Welfare: And if we will not, we may thank our selves for our own Ruin and Destruction. Another may injure us, but no Man can everlastingly undo us but our selves.

And farther consider, This is a principal Point and Property of Wisdom, to look forward; and not only to consider the present Pleasure, and seeming Advantage of any Action, but the future Consequence of it: and there is no greater Argument of an Imprudent Man, than to gratify himself for the present, in the doing of a thing which will turn to his greater Prejudice afterwards; especially if that Inconvenience, that is like to be the Issue of it, be great and intolerable, as it is in this Case. For eternal Happiness or Misery depend upon the Course and Actions of this present Life, and according as we behave our selves in this World, it will go well or ill with us for ever: so that this is a Matter of the greatest importance, and deserves most our serious Thoughts; and in Matters of mighty Consequence, a Wise Man will take all things into Consideration, and look before him as far as he can.

3. And Lastly, 'Tis a Duty well deserves you should perform it. Is there any thing in the World deserves so much your Consideration as those important Matters beforemention'd? Hath God set all Mankind in a Race, wherein

wherein Heaven or Hell is their certain End, and will not Men consider to which of these he is going? Is the Glass of our Life running out so fast, at the end of which we must come to Judgment, and shall we not consider of making our Accounts ready? Does God stand knocking at the Doors of our Hearts, and calling us to Repentance and Conversion to him, that we may secure our Souls, and asking us, Why will ye die? And shall we not heed these things, nor lay them to heart? O the monstrous Stupidity of the Children of Men! O wretched Inconsiderateness! How many thousand Souls doth it destroy? How many are there that have the dismal Marks of Impenitency upon them, and yet go on securely, and cry Peace to themselves? How many are there that think they are sanctify'd, when they are not (tho we are told that *without Holiness none shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14.) and others that they may be saved, tho they go on in their Sins, and that there needs not so much ado to be saved? And whence is all this, but from want of Consideration? To conclude then, if the Mischief of Inconsiderateness be so great, and the Benefit of Self-Reflection, and communing with our own Hearts be likewise so, and indispensably necessary; let us all be persuaded to the serious Practice of this Duty. But if after all that hath been said, any will still neglect it, and will not by any means be persuaded to it, there is no more to be said to them for the present, but only this, they are Persons that seem to be bent upon, and daily hastening to their own Ruin and Destruction.

C H A P. I.

Of the Existence of God, his Nature, and Divine Attributes.

A Firm Belief of the Being of God, with a right, clear, and distinct Knowledge of him, and of his glorious Attributes, are the Foundation and Basis of all true Religion. And that there is a God, a Supreme and Sovereign Being (who was always what he is) the very Light of Nature and Reason do sufficiently and fully demonstrate: for that it is utterly impossible for any Being to raise it self from nothing, to be something, must pass for an undeniable Principle, seeing otherwise it should act, and work, and be a Cause before it was, or had a Being; which is a plain Contradiction. And from hence it will necessarily follow, that there was some Being or Entity always, and from Eternity; and that there never was a moment, whereof it could be truly said, there was no Being at all.

Now if it be clear and evident that there is a Being that was ever and eternally (for else there had never been any Being at all) it will hence follow, that this Being is a necessary Being, and is absolutely first and before all other Beings, and had no Cause or Author of its Existence. There was an absolute Necessity of this first Being's Existence, and an utter Impossibility of his not being, or not being always what he is, and as he is; and This is God.

Now of the many Arguments from the very Light of Reason, that might confirm and evince this Truth, these following may be sufficient, without any other to do it.

1. The constant Sense of Mankind agrees in this, That there is a Supreme Being that governs the World: and tho this Notion of God has been by some wicked Men corrupted and deprav'd, and by a continu'd stupifying and hardning Course of Wickedness, has in the Hearts of some particular Persons been almost obliterated and raz'd out; yet the general Consent of Nations, that

that there is a Supreme Being, shews that there is something in the Nature of Man, some secret Instinct that suggests this unto him.

2. Another Argument may be taken from the admirable Frame and Structure of this visible World, wherein we may see clear Characters of God's infinite Power and Wisdom; *Rom. i. 20.* This admirable and stupendous Frame had certainly a Beginning, neither could the Parts thereof come together by chance, neither could it make or give Being to it self, for then it must work before it had a Being, which is impossible. And if we do but consider the Constancy and Regularity of the celestial Motions, the wonderful Productions of the Earth, the admirable Frame of Man's Body, and the Wonders that we meet with in every Organ of his Senses, the amazing Structure and Use of the Brain; and how all things in the human Body are so exactly shap'd and fitted for their several Uses; surely we must acknowledg a Deity. But above all, we cannot but be convinc'd hereof, if we duly consider the immaterial Soul of Man, which is a Being distinct from his Body, and from all Matter, and has a nobler Nature and Operations than could be exerted by it, as to think and consider of things; which doing well and wisely, we should soon be brought to find the Notion of a God and Supreme Being in our Minds. It has an inward Power of chusing what it apprehends Good, and refusing what it apprehends Evil; and by its meer Will can move and command the Body at its pleasure.

3. The working of Miracles before vast Multitudes (that could not all be deceiv'd, if there be any Certainty of Sense) and this by Words, that could not meerly of themselves produce such Effects; clearly and fully proves a Being superior to Nature, and that can dispose of it at his pleasure, and has a Strength superior to it, that can either suspend, stop, or change the Course of it as he pleases: as the Plagues in *Egypt*, the dividing the Red-Sea and *Jordan*, and the Miracles our Saviour wrought, and the whole Frame of the glorious Universe, and every Creature in it, do all give their Testimony to this Truth (as the Psalmist says, *Psal. 10.*) being all of them above the Power of Man to make; the brute Creatures being enabled to work with such Sagacity as they do, according to the Law of their Creation.

Let us be still strengthening our Faith in this Principle; because tho the Principle be so common that all will own it, yet there is a great difference in the Belief and Persuasion of it: for where this is wrought by Faith, it's strong; but in others weak and slight, wanting Depth of Earth.

Being therefore well assur'd and convinc'd that there is a God, of his Being and Existence; our next Work should be to labour to know this God aright. In order to this, let us consider what Apprehensions we ought to have of God: and seeing our natural Light is not sufficient to discover and find out what may be known of him, he has vouchsaf'd, in his Holy Word, to reveal and manifest himself and his glorious Nature to us.

1. And First, That he is *one God*, Deut. 6. 4. Mark 12. 29. Isa. 44. 6, 8. a pure, simple, immaterial, and invisible Being; a Spirit of transcendent Glory, eternal, necessary, self-existing, and infinitely perfect, not having any Matter; but communicates to all other Beings their Existence, and all the Perfections they have, and is therefore superior to all other Beings; one infinitely great and wise Mind or Spirit, free from all Imperfection. And therefore we should not represent him to our Fancies under any bodily Shape whatsoever, but should raise our Apprehensions to the highest and holiest, to the purest and most spiritual Conceptions of him we can possibly frame; to see the invisible God by the Eye of Faith, and observe his Power and Efficacy working in all his Creatures; that he enlightens us by the Sun, makes our Food to nourish us, and his other Creatures to do us good. The Schoolmen say there are three Ways of knowing God.

(1.) By ascribing all possible Perfections to him. (2.) When we remove from him all Imperfections whatsoever. (3.) When we see and acknowledge that all things made, receive their Being, and all their Powers and Perfections from him.

2. That God is an infinite Being, for whatsoever hath no Cause of Being, can have no Bounds or Limits of Being set to it; for the reason why any Being is bounded, limited, and confin'd to such a Measure and Degree of Being only, is because the Author of its Existence and Nature communicated only so much Being, Power, and Efficacy unto it, and no more: He that made it, set

Limits

Limits and Bounds to it, that hitherto its Essence should go and extend, and no farther. The first Being therefore that hath its Being in it self, hath nothing to give it any Limitation, or set any Bounds to it, and therefore must needs be Infinite and Immense: Infinite in Life, and so Eternal; Infinite in Wisdom, and so Omniscient; Infinite in Power, and so Omnipotent; and Infinite in Goodness and all Perfections, and that is God, whom we acknowledg, adore, and worship.

They are incommunicable, which cannot belong to any Creature. As,

Of the Attributes of God.

1. God is an Eternal Being; *Psal. 90. 1, 2. From Everlasting to Everlasting thou art God. Eternal.* That which had no Cause, had no Beginning; and that which had no Beginning, is eternal. *Isa. 57. 15.* He is call'd the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity. *A thousand Years with him* (the Apostle says) *are but as one Day*; *2 Pet. 3. 8.* To God there is no Time past, present, or to come; for all Time, issues from him, as Rivers from the Sea. God is his own Eternity; all the Ages of the World compar'd with him, amount not to so much as the hundred thousandth part of a Minute. God's Duration, as himself, is infinite: His Eternity is evident by the name God gives himself, *I am*; by which it appears, his Essence knows no Past nor Future. All our Time is but a small Drop, or as a Sand to all the small Atoms of which the World is made; but God is an unbounded Sea of Being.

Now God's Eternity should fill our Souls with admiring Thoughts of him, and to glorify him accordingly. Who can think of Eternity without amazement? Eternity makes good things infinitely good, and evil things infinitely evil. Man is a Creature of few days, and e'er long shall be no more here. Our Bodies are perishing, and so are all our worldly Comforts, when at the best; but our Souls must last to Eternity. Let us therefore mind things eternal, whatever we neglect; *2 Cor. 4. 18.* let us labour to secure to our selves eternal Happiness, and to escape that Misery that will be eternal. Let us so pray, so read, so live, and do all that we do in this inch and moment of time here, as those that are Probationers for and desire to obtain a happy Eternity: we can never exceed herein. Think often of it, and it will
be

be of great advantage to you; but for want of this, how amazing will be the Thoughts of it at Death, to a Soul that has been before unthoughtful, and unprepar'd for it! Consider betimes, let not your eternal State depend upon Uncertainties. High Objects, as Eternity is, lift up the Soul to God, and tend to make the Mind answerable to them. Beware of Sin; the Pleasures of it are but for a season, and fade away as Candles before the Sun, but the Sting of it endures to Eternity. Husband your Time well, and bestow your Thoughts and Affections chiefly on those things that will endure and last to all Eternity. This is the Errand on which we are sent into this World, and the Work for which our Time is given us, to provide for a blessed Eternity. Consider also with whom you have to do, a God whose Love and Wrath are both eternal, who is an everlasting Refuge and Habitation to his People; and let us fear him, who can cast both Soul and Body into Hell for ever. Remember farther from hence, that God is the Lord of all times, and makes them long or short to us as he pleaseth. Boast not of to-morrow, and much less of many Years; *Psal. 90. 5, 6. James 4. 13, 14. If the Lord will, is a Phrase* (tho too much forgotten) yet should be in continual remembrance with us. The present Season is what he gives us to sow and seek him in, that so we may receive an Harvest answerably hereafter. Let none therefore say, I will repent and turn to God hereafter; this were to break into God's Right, who therefore often breaks off such untimely, for their Presumption.

2. He is not confin'd or limited to any place, *Omnipresent*. but is every where present. *Can any hide himself in secret places* (the Lord says) *that I should not see him? Do not I fill Heaven and Earth?* *Jer. 23. 24.* The Psalmist cries out, *Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy Presence? If I ascend, &c. Psal. 139. 7.* God being infinite, there can be no Limits of his Essence, but he must necessarily be of an infinite Presence, and totally in every place. Finite Creatures are present only according to their several Parts, here one Part, and there another Part of them; but God being without all Parts, wherever he is, he must be totally there. He is not commensurated by the

the Place, but is every where All-present, for his Essence is unbounded : from hence we may gather, that he governs the World immediately ; he indeed uses Men in governing his People, but is himself still present with those Means, takes care of his People, to guide and dispose all subordinate Means according to his own Pleasure ; not a Sparrow falls to the ground, nor a Hair from the head, but according to his Will : *Mat. 10. 29. Acts 2. 23.* Chuse him therefore for your God, who is every where, and then rejoice much in the Ampleness of your Portion. Set him always before you, stand in awe of his Presence, and dare not to sin against him ; trust in him, he is always graciously present with his People to do them good, and will never leave them. He is also present to restrain your Enemies, even with their Minds, Counsels, Enterprizes (how secret soever, and tho a great way off) to prevent them, as he sees good ; with Friends, to stir them up for your good, and with your Children when you are dead. You are apt in these cases to be solicitous, but remember God is omnipresent, who is the Portion of his People ; and let this support you, and stay your Hearts with much Comfort. We see a ground herein for his particular Providence ; even in the smallest things, God is every where, and disposes all these as he pleases. Our Father gives us every bitter Cup to drink, as he did to Christ ; every Enemy is but a Staff in God's hand, as *Nebuchadnezzar*. Their Tongues are but Scourges in his hand, and he can tame and rule them as he pleases. This should teach us Patience, Meekness, and Quietness of Mind in all Injuries we suffer from Men. The Lord is at hand, *James 5. 8.* God looks on all the while, and will avenge you in due time.

And seeing God is always present with us, we should walk with him, as *Enoch* did ; observe all the Passages of his Providence towards us, make known to him all our Wants, Griefs, and Desires, and study to please him in all our Actions. Be persuaded he looks on you in all you speak or do, and is speaking to you by his Word, by the Motions of his Spirit, by the Counsel of Friends, and by the Dispensations of his Providence ; by his Mercies, Corrections, or Judgments on our selves or others.

He observes also all the Sins you commit, and the Good you do: Make use of this for your Restraint from Evil, and Encouragement in Good. Is not God ever present? *Gen. 34. 9. Job 31. 1, 4.* Believe the Omnipresence of God, and so walk with him.

3. Farther, this should convince us that *Incomprehensible* he is Incomprehensible, and that we cannot have a full, adequate, and comprehensive Knowledge of him. *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection? Job 11. 7.* We may as well think to take up all the Waters of the Sea in a Shell, as with our narrow Understandings fully to comprehend God. Stop then all bold Inquiries, O vain Man, concerning him, farther then he has thought fit to reveal of himself; and remember we are finite Worms, and God is infinite. Do not go about to measure him by thy narrow Apprehension, nor to question, much less deny that of him, which thou canst not understand. Do not suspect what his Word reveals of him, but suspect thy own dark Understanding (being by Sin become so) that can conceive no better of so Incomprehensible an Essence.

4. God is Omnipotent, *Mat. 19. 26. With Omnipotent. God all things are possible.* His Essence being infinite, his Power must needs be infinite also: Some have observ'd, that 'tis express'd seventy times in Scripture, that God is Almighty. See *Mat. 19. 26. Luke 1. 39. Gen. 28. 3.* And the Omnipotence of God consists in this, that he is able to do whatsoever is absolutely and simply possible to be done; not in making Contradictions true, or doing things not possible; he cannot lye, or deny himself: for these things speak not Perfection, but Weakness. Now God's Omnipotence should make these Impressions on us:

(1.) We should stand in awe of him, and tremble at his Judgments. Shall the Lion roar, and shall not the Beasts of the Field tremble? Shall Omnipotency shake his Rod over us, and shall not we humble our selves? We should fear sinning against or displeasing so great a God. It is the *Beginning of Wisdom*, *Prov. 16. 6.*

(2.) See hence what ground we have earnestly to seek to him in all our Difficulties and Distresses. The ground of all the Petitions in the Lord's Prayer, is this; *For*

thine

shine in the Kingdom, the Power, and Glory: Let the Enemies of the Church be ever so strong, God is stronger than they; and he has promis'd the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, Mat. 16. 18. Nothing encourages more to fervent Prayer, than a due Apprehension of God's Omnipotence.

(3.) This Attribute should impress upon our Hearts a strong and stedfast Confidence. Psal. 9. 10. *They that know thy Name, will put their Trust in thee.* Oh what encouragement is it to the Servants of God, that they have Omnipotence engag'd for them! and what a shame is it for us to distrust an Almighty God! He can supply our greatest Wants, mitigate or remove our greatest Pains, he can deliver us from our greatest Distresses or Fears. See Dan. 3. 17. What will vain Man have confidence in, if he distrust Omnipotence? And where can we be safe, if not in the hands of the Almighty? Mar. 8. 26. Remember, O Christian, in thy lowest Estate, and in the Church's greatest Dangers, the Almighty is able to raise his Church or thee again, even in a moment. Read and consider these Scriptures: *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness?* Psal. 78. 19. *The Fear of Man bringeth a Snare, but whose putteth his Trust in the Lord, shall be safe.* Prov. 24. 25. *What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee; in God have I put my Trust, I will not fear what Flesh can do unto me:* Psal. 56. 3, 4. *Cursed be the Man that trusteth in Man,* &c. T

(4.) The Belief of God's Almightyness should possess us with a holy Admiration of him, and cause us both in Heart and Voice to magnify him. What a Power is that which made the World out of nothing, by his word [LET IT BE] which hangs the Earth in the Air, and upholds it without any Foundation; which stretcheth out the Heavens as a Curtain, and hath so bespangled with Stars that glorious Canopy? which at first placed, and since maintaineth all things in their Order; which causeth every part of Nature to do its Office; the Sun and Moon constantly to keep their Course? Jer. 31. 35. He that does all this, is infinitely able to do more, being infinite in Power. All God's Attributes are equal, being his very Essence. Now the infinite Wisdom and Knowledge of God, what is it not able to conceive? And his Power being likewise an infinite Power, and as large as

his Will, is infinitely able to act whatsoever he can conceive. *Psal.* 135. 6.

(5.) Seeing God is Almighty, this is matter of great Comfort and Support to all that have an Interest in him; that they have an Almighty God for their God, who is able to do whatsoever he pleaseth: He is All in All, All that the Appetite of Man can desire. If so in Heaven, why not on Earth too? Did we firmly believe this, we would be content to have him alone, and not grasp the Creature together with him, as too often we do. We need, it's true, other things; but God hath All in himself, the Comfort of them all: for there can be nothing in the Effect, but what is in the Cause. Whosoever has Communion with God, by him hath the Comfort of Houses, Brethren, &c. *Mark* 10. 29, 30. and would not care, comparatively with him, to have such things restor'd, if offer'd: witness the Apostles and Martyrs.

We say we doubt not of his Power, but his Will: but indeed our Doubts, Discouragements, and Dejections arise hence, that we think the Lord cannot help us, tho perhaps we discern it not; else why pray we with cheerfulness, when we see a great probability of a thing, and faint if it be otherwise? for God is as able to bring it to pass when least probable, as when it is most so.

(6.) Make use of God's Power in Wants, Straits, and Temptations, or whatever you cannot outwrestle of yourselves. This Attribute is reveal'd for this purpose, when Lust and Corruption rage, Omnipotent Power can heal all. *Jam.* 4. 5, 6. He that draws beautiful Flowers out of the Earth, so unapt as it seems in Winter, is able to do the like in Grace, for an Heart that is far from Grace. Pray with Hope in the most desperate Condition, for God's Power is never at a loss; as for *Daniel* in the Den, and the three Children in the Furnace: And to doubt of his Power, provokes him to Anger. *2 Kings* 7. 2. *Psal.* 78. 20, 21. Pray for Help with Cheerfulness, Hope, and Confidence, as if the thing was easy to be done: for is not he Almighty who can make dry Bones live, and can raise or bring down as he pleaseth? *Ezek.* 37. 7. Wo therefore to all those whom the Almighty is against, but happy are they that have the God of *Israel* for their Refuge and Portion.

5. God is Omniscient; *Psal. 147. 5. His Understanding is infinite: The Lord searcheth all Hearts, and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts: 1 Chron. 28. 9. Man looketh on the outward Appearance, but God looketh on the Heart: 1 Sam. 16. 7. I the Lord search the Heart, I try the Reins; to give every one according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings: Jer. 17. 10. He is said to see the Reins and the Heart, Chap. 20. 12.*

Now if God be Omniscient, how watchfully and carefully should we carry our selves in all places? How should we fear to sin in secret against him whose Eye is always upon us? How sincere and upright should we be in all our Duties? How should this Motto be ever in our Minds, *Cave, Deus videt; Take heed, God sees.* If our Breasts were chrystal Glasses, and Men were able thro them to see all the Workings of our Hearts, how careful should we be what Thoughts we entertain'd, how our Affections were order'd? God sees our Hearts as we see Faces, and yet how little sensible do we seem to be of it, that we are always under his Eye, with the most inward Workings and Recesses of our Hearts? How many are afraid to commit a Sin before Men, that are not afraid to sin before the all-seeing Eye of God. If God be Omniscient, this should teach us to be sincere and upright, and conscientiously to endeavour both to avoid secret Sins, and to perform secret Duties. *When thou prayest, enter into thy Closet; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly: Mat. 6. 6.*

6. This Property of Unchangeableness the Lord often takes to himself; as *Numb. 23. 19. Immutable. Mal. 3. 6. I am the Lord, I change not. Jam.*

1. 17. *He is without Variableness or Shadow of turning.* There can be no Vanity or Imperfection in him, being infinitely perfect; but Creatures are subject to Change, because subject to Imperfection, nothing is in him but what is himself: therefore as it is impossible his Essence should be annihilated, so in other respects he cannot admit of any Shadow of turning. He being also infinite, fills all, and cannot extend himself any farther, and therefore is unchangeable. When he is said to repent or be grieved, as in *Gen. 6. 6.* and so in *1 Sam. 15. 11.* it is spoken only after the manner of Men; only in

regard of the *Act*, not of *himself*: He is said to draw near to us, and to depart from us; but it is as the Sun in an House, disappearing when the Windows are shut: all the Change is in Man, but none in God. Expect not then Unchangeableness from the Creatures, where it is not to be had; this Expectation raises our Affections too much to them; and these, when cross'd and disappointed, bring forth strong Afflictions: but if we lived more upon an unchangeable God, and our Conversations were more in Heaven, this would put a Stability into all our Enjoyments; for thereby what is lost in the Creature, will be abundantly supply'd and made up in the Creator himself, and there we should enjoy a constant Serenity. Let us go to him when we find our selves subject to Mutability. It is God only that is unchangeable, that can establish thy Heart; beg it of him, it is he only that can work it in us and for us; and let him have the Glory of it. It is inward Corruption that causes all the Unevenness in our Lives, and our Unlikeness to God; how solicitous then should we be to get it more mortify'd and subdu'd? Observe thy Heart daily, Objections thou canst not answer; Lusts and Reasons that overballance thee, work and renew thy Resolutions against them; as Means in his Hand, and of his Appointment, from whom alone thou canst receive spiritual Strength and Establishment.

We come next to speak of God's *communicable Attributes*, which tho they be infinite Perfections in him, yet there are some Resemblances of them found in the Creatures.

1. God is infinitely Wise: *1 Tim. 1. 17.*
Wisdom. The only Wise God. He administers the World and the Affairs of it with infinite Wisdom, tho many of his Ways and Providences are obscure and intricate as to our shallow Apprehensions. His Understanding is infinite; *Psal. 147. 5.* God knows what is fittest for us, and the fittest time to help us in. Hence we should learn,

(1.) To search and labour after Wisdom, that we may be like him, to know him and his reveal'd Will, and the way to eternal Life, and to endeavour to walk in it; and this is true Wisdom. True Piety is the greatest Wisdom, and Sin is the greatest Folly. It is that to which the Damnation of every Soul now in Hell is owing.

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Therefore the Apostle exhorts us, that *we walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as Wise*. That which is our greatest Wisdom, to seek and endeavour the Salvation of our Souls, requires our utmost Care and Industry.

(2.) We should humbly beg Wisdom of God, who is the alone Author and Giver of it. *Jam. 1. 5. If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask it of God, &c.* We should seek to him, who is infinite in Wisdom, for Counsel and Direction in all our Undertakings.

(3.) Let us take heed of trusting in our own Wisdom. *The Way of Man is not in himself*, Jer. 10. 23. Read the Scriptures much, for they are able to make us wise unto Salvation. Remember what the Wise-Man says; *Trust in the Lord with all thy Heart, and lean not to thy own Understanding, In all thy Ways acknowledg him, and he will direct thy Paths*: Prov. 3. 5, 6.

(4.) Let this teach us to rest in all God's Determinations and Dispensations. Shall Dust and Ashes judg the Lord, who is only wise? We should learn to submit to his infinite and unerring Wisdom, as well as to his holy Will.

This should also encourage the People of God in their greatest Straits, and against all the Canning and Subtily of their Enemies. Let us labour faithfully to do our Duties, and then humbly rest in the infinite Wisdom of God, who knows better what is good for us than we do for our selves.

2. God is infinitely Holy; he is often stil'd *the Holy one of Israel, glorious in Holiness*; Holiness, *Exod. 15. 11.* And *Rev. 4. 8.* he is stil'd *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.* The Consideration of God's transcendent Purity and Holiness should teach us,

(1.) To endeavour to imitate God in this Perfection; *Be ye Holy, for I am Holy*, 1 Pet. 1. 15. Holiness should have an universal Influence upon our whole Man, there should be Holiness in our Thoughts, Purity in our Hearts, Sincerity in our Intentions, Truth in our Words, Justice in our Actions, Sobriety, Chastity, Temperance, Humility, Modesty, in all our Deportment and Conversations. *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. Nothing enters into the *New Jerusalem* that defiles, *Rev. 21. 27.*

(2.) We should look to it that we do not merely act a part of Holiness, but that we really endeavour to be so; nothing in the World is better than real Holiness, and nothing more detestable than the Counterfeit of it. Counterfeit Piety is double Iniquity.

(3.) We should hence be very far from being ashamed of Holiness; it being the Image of God. The Devil and his Instruments labour all they can to disparage it, and by Nick-names and Artifices to keep Men from esteeming it, or endeavouring after it. It's observ'd, that among the *Turks, Jews, Indians*, and the *Papists* themselves, the most zealous and strict in their several Religions, are most esteem'd and honour'd: but in the greatest part of the Protestant World, the most tenacious of the Evangelical Truth, and the most strict and godly in their Lives, are most hated, disgrac'd, and villify'd. And thus the Devil's Malice, and the Corruptions of Men concur, to bring Dishonour and Disesteem upon that which is a Participation of the Divine Nature, and makes Man most like to God.

3. God is infinitely Just. Justice in God is that Perfection of his Nature, whereby he is Just in himself, and exerciseth Justice towards all his Creatures. *Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do right?* Gen. 18. 25. *The Lord is righteous in all his Ways*, Psal. 145. 17. *Are not my Ways equal, saith the Lord?* Ezek. 18. 24. God's Justice and Righteousness is essential to him, as his Mercy also is: and these two Properties, as they are essential in God, are not opposite one to another, tho their Effects sometimes are, and the Manifestation of his Justice may be at one time more than at another; and tho he is infinite in both, yet he is more ready to manifest the Effects of his Mercy than of his Justice.

Object. It often goes ill with the Righteous in this World, and we see the Wicked prosper.

Ans. 1. None are perfectly righteous here, therefore no wonder if God's Children have the Rod sometimes upon their Backs for their Sins.

2. God may tenderly love his Children, tho he afflict them, *Heb. 12. 6.* God sanctifieth the Afflictions of his People to their good. *I know, O Lord, thy Judgments are right, and that thou in Faithfulness hast afflicted*

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me, Psal. 119. 75. Grace is increas'd thereby, and their Glory farther'd.

They are assur'd, *That all things shall work together for their good*, Rom. 8. 28. And tho' *Godliness has the Promises of this Life, as well as of that to come*, 1 Tim. 4. 8. yet those Promises of temporal Blessings must be understood with this Limitation, that they shall be made good to them so far as God shall see it good for his Children, and conducing to their greater and eternal Good, and no farther: whilst the Prosperity of the Wicked is many ways extremely disadvantageous to them, with reference to their eternal Condition. The Prosperity of Fools destroys them; *Prov. 1. 32.* Outward Sufferings therefore with spiritual Blessings, are ordinarily the Lot of God's Children here on Earth; as outward Prosperity, with spiritual Calamity, is frequently the Lot of the Ungodly. But there will be a Day of Judgment when all things will be set right, that appear out of course here in this World; and an eternal State is long enough to punish the Wicked, and to reward the Godly.

(1.) This should make all impenitent Sinners tremble, except they repent; the infinite Justice of God is engag'd against them, to punish them everlastingly. What Folly and Madness then is it to make a mock at Sin, and trifle with Hell and Damnation? Should not the Terrors of God make Sinners afraid, and to stand in awe of his just Judgments.

(2.) The Justice of God is a great Consolation to the Righteous: He will justify whom his Gospel justifies, because he is just, 1 John 1. 9. If we break off our Sins by Repentance, and apply our selves to him thro' the Blood of Christ for the Pardon of them; he is just, and therefore will make good his Promise of Pardon unto us.

(3.) God being infinitely just, let us bless his Name for finding out a way whereby his Justice may be satisfy'd; and so such sinful Creatures as we are pardon'd, who could not have paid one Farthing of our Debt. Let us for ever bless his Holy Name, that he has provided so good a Surety for us; who has undertaken the Discharge of all, to satisfy the infinite Justice of God on our behalf, and made this Attribute, that was as a flaming Sword against us, to be engag'd on our behalf, thro' a blessed Mediator: *Psal. 85. 10.*

(4.) Let

(4.) Let us labour to imitate God in this Attribute of his Justice, by giving to every one what of right is due to them. Let us not rob God of his Right, who created us, and has bought us at so costly a Price. Let us give him our Hearts, not rob him of his Time allotted for his Service; and serve him with the best of our Affections. Let us give to Man also what is due to him, not injuring any wittingly or willingly; and in case of Wrong done, let us labour to make all due Satisfaction for it.

4. God is merciful: He is call'd, *The Father of Mercies*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. *Abundant in Mercy*; *Rich in Mercy*, Eph. 2. 4. *He delighteth in Mercy*, Micah 7. 18. *The Lord is gracious and full of Compassion, slow to Anger, and of great Mercy*: *The Lord is good to all, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works*; Psal. 145. 8, 9. All his Attributes are glorious, yet he rejoiceth most in the Manifestation of his Mercy and Goodness. When Moses desir'd the Lord to shew him his Glory, he said, *I will make all my Goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the Lord before thee, and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew Mercy to whom I will shew Mercy*; Exod. 33. 18, 19. The Lord pass'd by before him, and proclaim'd, *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, keeping Mercy for thousands, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin; and that will by no means clear the Guilty*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. He delights not in the Death of Sinners, and will destroy none but for their wilful Sins, and Impenitency therein.

Now this Attribute of God's Mercy should lead Sinners to Repentance, and shame them from their Sins; but not encourage and engage them to it. Remember we have to do with a merciful God, whose Arms of Mercy are open to receive returning Sinners, Isa. 55. 6, 7, 8. but Mercy it self will have no mercy on the Impenitent. *It is a People of no Understanding, therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them*, Isa. 27. 11. *Wo to them against whom Mercy it self shall rise up in Judgment!* Were there no hope of Pardon, Men would be desperate, as the Devil is; but *there is Mercy with thee, that thou mayst be feared*, says the Psalmist, Psal. 139. 4.

his Nature, and Divine Attributes. 27

The Mercy of God should teach us to imitate him in this Attribute: We should labour to be merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful, as to the Manner, tho we cannot reach to the Measure of it: this Goodness of God should possess us with a Desire to be conform'd to his Goodness in our measure. *Summe Religionis est, imitari quem colis.*

Now this Attribute of God's Mercy is manifested two ways especially; in giving and forgiving. How doth the Lord supply our Wants daily? *He openeth his Hand, and satisfieth the Desire of every living thing.* We should therefore imitate him therein, in shewing Mercy to those that stand in need of our Help, as we are able. And he manifests his Mercy also continually in forgiving our Debts; and how vast is the Number of them, when we stand in need of his Forgiveness daily! God's Mercy to us lays the greatest Obligation imaginable upon us to forgive others. Shall not we forgive an hundred Pence, who have had ten thousand Talents forgiven us? *Mat. 18, 27.*

The Mercy of God should be the Matter of our daily Praises; and the Meditation of this Attribute of God should produce in us delightful Thoughts of him: it should keep (as it were) a continual Sweetness upon our Hearts, and cause us to study the most grateful Returns to him. They that live continually upon Mercy, should be as it were turn'd into Love and Thankfulness; what sweet Meditations should we have of that Mercy of God, that provides so well for his Servants in their Warfare and Pilgrimage thro the World? How affectionately should we recount the Mercies of our Youth and riper Years, yea, of every State and Condition we have been in, to the Honour of our great Benefactor? But especially if God has wrought upon our Hearts with his saving Grace, how should we bow down our Heads and adore the Riches and Freeness of it, and lift them up in his continual Praises? And whatever he has wrought of his own Image in us, let us ascribe to him, and say as the Apostle, *By the Grace of God I am what I am,* 1 Cor. 15. 10. The Meditation of God's Goodness and Mercy to us should also possess us with a *Superlative* Love to him; and this prevailing Love to God is the surest Evidence of our Sanctification. He that has most Love,

Love, has most Grace; and if you truly love God, you will be loth to offend him. The Love of God doth not reign in that Soul, where the Love of the World, or of Sin, and the Flesh, or of Pleasure reigneth.

And we should especially observe and be affected with the Mercy of God, so highly manifested in the Design of our Redemption. *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, John 3. 16, &c. Herein is Love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our Sins, 1 John 4. 10.* We have reason to cry out, O the Depth of the Riches of the Mercy of God! Lord, what is Man that thou thus visitest him with thy Mercy and Favour! This should encourage us to trust in him; to commit our Souls, Bodies, Estates, and all our Interests into his hands, who is Love it self, 1 John 4. 16. and infinitely able to secure all for us, for our greatest and everlasting Benefit and Advantage.

5. God is Faithful. The Scriptures abundantly bear Testimony to this, *Deut. 7. 9. Know therefore, that the Lord thy God, he is God, the Faithful God, which keepeth Covenant and Mercy with them that love him and keep his Commandments, to a thousand Generations. The Lord is faithful, Isa. 49. 7. Let God be true, own'd and acknowledg'd to be so, tho all Mankind should be false and deceitful, Rom. 3. 4. One of the Letters of God's glorious Name is Abundant in Truth, or Faithfulness.*

Now God's Faithfulness is manifested in fulfilling his Promises, and in accomplishing his Threatnings.

(1.) God cannot fail of his Word. *It is impossible for him to lye, Heb. 6. 18. He is Truth it self, and in him there is no Falshood: The Strength of Israel will not lye, 1 Sam. 15. 29. Now God has promis'd to all penitent Believers in Christ, that they shall be sav'd; and threatened, that they that believe not shall perish. He has promis'd to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, Luke 11. 13. and what reason have we firmly to believe these Promises? As for temporal things, he has not promis'd absolutely, but with a tacit Condition, if he in his infinite Wisdom see it good and expedient for them; for which we must pray with a Faith of Dependence on him, and Submission to his Holy Will, referring our selves to*

his

his infinite Wisdom. We must act Faith on the All-sufficiency and Power of God, and then humbly resign ourselves to his Holy Pleasure.

And from this Attribute of God's infinite Faithfulness and Truth; consider the Heinousness of the Sin of Unbelief. He that believes not God, has made him a Liar, 1 John 5. 10. And this is the rather to be heeded, that we may stir up in our selves a diligent Watchfulness against this Sin, which with many is accounted but a mere Infirmary. What matter of Humiliation does our Prone-ness to this Sin (to distrust God) justly minister to us! Many hardly trust the Promises of God so much as they would the Word of a mortal Man, whom they account honest and just. God's Faithfulness certainly should teach us to hate every Motion to Unbelief, which is the very Bane of all Religion so far as it prevails. Let us therefore take care to get all Remainders of it out of our Hearts. Farther,

If God be faithful, what great Encouragement have we to trust in him and his Promises continually? these should be the Ground of our Faith, the Stay of our Souls, the Foundation of all our Hopes; from whence all other Graces are excited in us. And how thankful should we be to him for giving his gracious Promises to us, to encourage us in the Ways of our Obedience! He has promised, that *he will never leave nor forsake those that are in Covenant with him*, Heb. 13. 5. that *all things shall work together for their good*, Rom. 8. 28. that *he will give Grace and Glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*, Psal. 84. 11. and particularly that none of his Promises concerning his Church will fail or fall to the ground: and what can we desire more? O how should our Faith live upon these Truths of God, and be daily more and more strengthened by them! *The Just shall live by his Faith*, Heb. 2. 4. Let us learn the Divine Art; certainly nothing makes us so humble, lowly, and puts us into so much Ease and Tranquillity of Mind, as to live by Faith on God. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace, whose Mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee*, Isa. 26. 3.

(2.) Learn hence also that God's Commands are faithful, and his Threatnings to the Disobedient will certainly also be accomplish'd. God has said it (and we may believe

Heve it) that he will come in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on all that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; and without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord. And can we then dare to continue in Ignorance, and Disobedience, and Unrighteousness; slighting Holiness, or mocking at serious Piety and Religion? If you believe God's Faithfulness, how could it be? Let us therefore labour to get an Interest in Christ, in whom all the Promises of God are Yea and Amen; have their Establishment and unalterable Ratification; 2 Cor. 1. 20.

Let God's Truth and Faithfulness engage us to be true and faithful to him. Have we not engag'd in our Baptism to forsake the Devil, the World, and the Flesh; and to devote our selves to the sincere Service and Worship of God? Are not his Vows upon us? And shall we be like those false Israelites, of whom 'tis said, They did flatter him with their Mouth, and ly'd unto him? Psal. 56. 12. And shall we expect the Performance of God's Promises, while we continue presumptuous and impenitent, and take no care to perform what he requires of us? But upon our careful Regard thereto, we may warrantably and comfortably expect to have the Divine Promises made good to us.

We should also endeavour to imitate God in this Attribute of his Faithfulness; in being true to God, and true to Man: Remember you serve a God of Truth; and 'tis the Glory of his Servants to be like him*.

* See more largely on this Subject, Charnock on the Attributes, Dr. Preston abridg'd by Jeanner, and Cradock's Supplement to Knowledge and Practice.

CHAP. II.

Of the TRINITY.

TO prevent all Misapprehensions concerning God and the Divine Nature, we must carefully observe the Revelation he has been pleas'd to make of himself in the Holy Scriptures: the Sum whereof is this; That *God is One*, that this One God is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that the Father is so stil'd in reference to the Son, and the Son is so stil'd in reference to the Father; and the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the Father and the Son: and by reason of their mutual Respects and Relations to each other, and their peculiar Properties arising from those Relations, they are distinct each from other.

This one God is set forth to us in the Scriptures as the only true God, whom we are to believe in, adore, worship, and obey, who is the first Cause, sovereign Lord, and ultimate End of all. *Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, Dent. 6. 4. Isa. 44. 6, 8.*

1. That the Father is God, a Person subsisting of himself, and his Paternity co-existent with his Deity, is deny'd by none; and evident in the Scripture. And if he had an eternal Son (as will be prov'd presently) he is necessarily an eternal Father. See *John 20. 17. & 17. 5. I am not yet ascended to my Father. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thy own self, &c.*

2. That Jesus Christ is God, the eternal Son of God, pre-existing in the Form or Essence of God (having all the Properties of the Deity) before his coming into the World, which was effected by voluntary Actings of his own. Consider the Divine Testimonies, by which this Truth is confirm'd and establish'd: *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, Psal. 45. 6.* This is apply'd to Christ, *Heb. 1. 8. Of old thou hast laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thine hands.* And this is declar'd by the Apostle to be meant of the Son of God, *Heb. 1. 10. See Prov. 8. 22—31. Jer. 23. 5, 6. His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the*

the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; *Isa.* 9. 6. To him the proper Name of God (*Jehovah*) is given, *Jer.* 23. 6. And *Rom.* 9. 5. he is call'd the most High God, *who is over all, God blessed for ever.*

Divine Properties are also ascribed to him: as, (1.) Eternity, *John* 1. 1—5. & *Rev.* 1. 8. That this is meant of Christ, compare *Chap.* 21. 6, 7. & 22. 13. (2.) Omnipresence, *Mat.* 18. 20. *John* 3. 13. (3.) Omnipotence, *Phil.* 3. 21. *Heb.* 1. 10. (4.) Omniscience, *John* 21. 17. & 2. 25. (5.) The Works both of Creation and Providence are ascrib'd to him, *John* 1. 3. *Heb.* 1. 3. And, (6.) Divine Worship, *Heb.* 1. 6. (7.) That he is to be believ'd in and rested on, *John* 14. 1. which is an Honour and Homage peculiar to God alone: and that the same Honour is to be given to him, is evident from *John* 5. 23.

3. That the Holy Ghost is God, will plainly appear also, by considering what is reveal'd concerning the Divine Existence, Excellencies, and Operations of this blessed Spirit. He is endu'd with personal Properties, and personal Actions are attributed to him, *viz.* to make Intercession, *Rom.* 8. 26. To come to Men, *John* 15. 26. He is one against whom a Sin may be committed, *Mat.* 12. 31. He is placed in the same Rank and Order with other divine Persons, and set forth as the proper Object of divine and religious Worship. *Mat.* 28. 19. *Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.* Understanding and Will are ascrib'd to him (which are distinguishing Characters of a Person) *1 Cor.* 2. 10. & *Chap.* 12. 11. And he is said to teach, *Luke* 12. 12. *John* 14. 26. And his Guidance and Assistance therefore is to be sought in our teaching any. He calls to the Ministry, *Acts* 13. 2, 3, 4 & 20. 28. And that he is an eternal divine Person, having one and the same divine Nature with the Father and the Son, and so truly and properly God, he is call'd so expressly, *Acts* 5. 4, 9. And divine Properties are attributed to him, which evidently declare him to be the most High God: such as Eternity, *Heb.* 9. 14. Immenity, *Psal.* 139. 7. Prescience, *Acts* 1. 16. Omniscience, *1 Cor.* 2. 10, 11.

Divine Works are also ascrib'd to him, which are proper only to God: as Creation, *Job* 33. 4. Working Miracles, *Mat.* 12. 28. And that he is a Person distinct from

from the Father and Son, and proceeding from them, appears from the following Scriptures. (1.) From the Father, *John* 15. 26. (2.) From the Son: he is call'd the Spirit of the Son, *Gal.* 4. 6. *Rom.* 8. 9.

Thus it has been prov'd there is but one God, yet three distinct Persons subsisting in the same Divine Essence or Being; and each Person having the whole Divine Nature, all the essential Properties of that Nature are in each Person. Our Reason it self being very weak and imperfect, is no fit Measure to try this divine Doctrine by; it being above the Comprehension of it. But certainly it is the highest Reason, that in things of purely Divine Revelation we should captivate our Understandings to the Authority of him that reveals them. Let us seek earnestly to God, that it may be given to us to know the Mysteries of his Kingdom, which Flesh and Blood have not reveal'd to us.

This is a Doctrine that has been much oppos'd in our time by the Adversaries of Truth, who have thereby struck at the very Root and Foundation of Christianity. And it may be fear'd, the Failing of so many Mens Profession (as we have seen of late) is in a great measure owing to this Error, which the *Socinians* have introduc'd, in denying this Doctrine, built so firmly upon the Scripture; and that their Declensions begun with their relinquishing this Foundation.

If at any time therefore you find it attack'd by such Adversaries, hold them strictly and peremptorily to the original Revelation, That God is One; that the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Ghost God: understanding by God the most High God, Sovereign of all the World, as is fully evidenced by Scripture-Testimony. And let all that have any true Desire of walking in the narrow Path of Truth and Holiness, labour in the first place judiciously to understand this sacred Doctrine, according to that original Revelation of it made in the Scriptures: and as you tender your precious and immortal Souls, take heed of being seduc'd, or warping in any measure from it. And as you have occasion and opportunity, read what has been writ more largely on this Subject by the Reverend Mr. *Cradock*, in his *Supplement to Knowledge and Practice*, Sect. 2. p. 10, &c.

C H A P. III.

*Of the Covenant of Works made with Man, and
Man's Apostacy from God.*

AFTER it had pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the Manifestation of the Glory of his eternal Power, Wisdom, and Goodness, to make of nothing the World and all things in it; he created Man, Male and Female, with reasonable and immortal Souls, enduing them with Knowledge, Righteousness, and true Holiness, after his own Image; having the Law of God written in their Hearts, and power to fulfil it: that Law being exceeding agreeable to his Reason, and sutable to the Inclinations of his Will, and not at all oppos'd by any Principle within him, which might make him either doubtful about his Duty, or dis-incline him to the Performance of it. And he was furnish'd also with a general Principle, disposing him (as it was most reasonable) to yield Obedience to whatsoever any positive Law, as the declar'd Will of God his Creator, should enjoin; but yet under a possibility of transgressing it, being left (according to the Law of his Creation) to the liberty of his own Will, which was subject to change. Therefore besides this natural Law written in their Hearts, the Lord also gave *Adam* a positive Law, to be as a Test or Proof of his Obedience, and to try him how he would behave himself towards his Maker. *Gen. 2. 16, 17. The Lord God commanded the Man, saying, of every Tree of the Garden thou mayst freely eat, but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

In which words is contain'd the Covenant which God made with Man at first, and which is call'd the Covenant of Works; which Man was under the greatest Obligation to submit unto, the Terms being not only in themselves exceeding reasonable, but as being also propounded and impos'd by him, who, as an absolute Lord, hath full power in his hands to give and impose what Law

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he pleases on his Creatures, and what Conditions he sees good: And in a dutiful Performance of the Conditions, Man might expect the Benefits promis'd. And while our first Parents continu'd subject unto these Laws, they were happy in their Communion with God, and had dominion over all the Creatures, which the Lord appointed should be in subjection to them. There was so long a perfect Rectitude in his Soul, the clearest Knowledge in his Understanding, of God and his Law, of the Creatures and all things, which was necessary to make him happy. He had in his Will a Disposition, together with an executive Power, to do every thing that was right, and to give what was due both to God and his Fellow-Creatures. His Affections were holy and pure, free from all Sin and Defilement, from all Disorder and Distemper; they were placed upon the most holy, high, and noble Objects. Man at first had a true, and his chief Love set upon God; his Desires were chiefly after him, and his Delight was chiefly in him, and no Creatures in the World had or would have had too great a share in them: and as for Grief and Shame, and the like Affections, tho they were in Man radically, yet they were not actively in him, so as to put forth any Acts thereof, till he had committed the first Sin, and then he began to mourn and be ashamed. Now considering the Nature of this Covenant, we may observe,

1. The Lord's great Condescension and Goodness, in that he who is the great God of Heaven and Earth, was eas'd to enter into a Covenant with his Creature.

2. That herein he laid upon Man no harder a Command, than the forbearing of one Tree; which he must needs judg easy and reasonable.

3. Man's great Advantage by this Covenant. God had not before engag'd himself to continue him in that Estate of Happiness; but by this Covenant God freely bound himself, and gave Man a Right to expect the things promis'd in this Covenant, if he continu'd in his Obedience.

4. We may observe God's great Care of Man, in arming his mutable Will against falling, both by Promises and Threatnings. He encourages him to Obedience, by the Reward promis'd; and deters him from Disobedience by the Danger threatned. What greater Good could he expect than the Lord here freely promis'd, and what

greater Evil could he fear than was here threatned? a Curse and Death being to be the Wages of the least Transgression: For the Covenant requir'd on Man's part perfect personal and perpetual Obedience, which was highly reasonable; he being also furnish'd with Strength and Ability, and a Principle inclining him thereunto: And therefore in case of Disobedience, this Covenant afforded no relief; no, not upon his Repentance. And thus the Case stood with Man in the State of his Innocence, and as he came out of the hands of God. But in the next place we must consider the Fall of Man from this his original Happines, by disobeying the Command of God, and forfeiting thereby the Privileges of this Covenant, that were contain'd in it: *Gen. 3. 1—7.*

The Devil having fallen from God himself, and envying our first Parents their present Happines, he sets upon *Eve* to draw them from their Obedience to God. The Temptation he spread before her was this, *Ye shall be as Gods.* He pretends to acquaint them with a way whereby they might raise themselves to a higher Condition than that they enjoy'd; and they being seduc'd by his Subtilty, ventur'd upon the Temptation to eat of the forbidden Fruit; believing the Serpent, who herein prov'd himself a Lyar and a Murderer from the beginning, and disbeliev'd the God of Truth, doubting of the Certainty of his Threatning and Commination. So that Infidelity and Doubting of the Truth of God's Word and Threatnings (thro the Devil's Insinuation) and Pride, with an Affectation of an higher Estate than God had plac'd them in, seem to be the first Sins of our first Parents. O the cursed Nature of Pride and Unbelief! How soon did these Sins enter into the very Angels! How soon did they undo our first Parents!

And here let us consider what was the sad Effects and Consequents of their Sin, and Breach of God's Covenant, both upon themselves and their Posterity.

1. They were hereby depriv'd immediately of that original Righteousness they were created in, and of their Communion with God.

2. They became wholly dead in Sin; they brought themselves thereupon into an Estate of Wrath, were immediately driven out of Paradise, and tho at present they were repriev'd from suffering the Penalty of the Law,

Law, yet they were thereby made liable to all the Miseries of this Life, and to Death both temporal and eternal; and they were by Sin render'd also utterly unable to help themselves out of that miserable Estate for ever. And as our first Parents, were the Root of all Mankind, so the Guilt of this their Sin was imputed, and the same Death in Sin and corrupted Nature was convey'd by them to all their Posterity descending from them by ordinary Generation. The Covenant was not made with *Adam* only, but with all Mankind, who were seminally or radically in him, and whose Essence was to be deriv'd from him. Hence all *Adam's* Posterity did eat of the forbidden Fruit in him, being all in his Loins at that time; as *Levi* is said to have paid Tythes in *Abraham*, because he was in the Loins of his Father *Abraham*, when *Melchisedeck* met him, *Heb. 7. 9, 10.* tho he was born some Generations after him. By one Man Sin enter'd into the World, and Death by Sin, thro him, *Rom. 5. 12.* and in him all have sinned. If a Father by Treason forfeit his Estate, no wonder that his Children are depriv'd of it. *Rom. 3. 23. All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God; i. e.* are depriv'd of that glorious Image that was stamp'd upon *Adam*, and instead of that original Righteousness which he had, a dreadful Depravation and Vitiosity of Nature, and a corrupt Disposition, was convey'd from them to all their Posterity, and naturally propagated from Parents to Children: for who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This Corruption of Nature is call'd the old Man, *Rom. 6. 6. the Sin dwelling in us, Rom. 7. 17.* It's call'd *Flesh*, as opposite to Grace, *Rom. 7. 18. the Law of the Members, Rom. 7. 23. the Body of Sin, and a Body of Death, Rom. 6. 6. & Chap. 7. 24.* In which place (in the next following words) it's plainly distinguish'd from actual Sin, as being expressly affirm'd to be the procreant Cause of it. So that by this Spring of original Corruption all our Faculties are now miserably vitiated and deprav'd.

(1.) Our Minds are exceedingly blinded.

(2.) Our Wills rendred averse to that which is good :
And,

(3.) Our Memories as unfaithful to retain it; but they are tenacious of Evil.

(4.) Our Consciences are defil'd.

38 Of the Covenant of Works, &c.

(5.) Our Affections greatly disorder'd. And,
 (6.) We are cast under the most dreadful Wrath and Curse of God. And besides the Effects of this Wrath and Curse upon our Souls, our Bodies are become liable to all kind of Diseases and Deformities, and all our Enjoyments and every Condition of our Lives (tho the final Execution of the Threatning is suspended) are subject to a Curse. But that which is most deplorable, and the compleating of all other Misery, we are liable, by reason of Sin, to eternal Death. And from this Fountain of our original Sin and Corruption (we being thereby not only utterly indispos'd, disabled, and made opposite to all that is good, but wholly inclin'd to all Evil) all actual Transgressions do proceed; the least of which do most justly condemn us, the Law requiring perfect and perpetual Obedience from us. *Gal. 3. 10. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the Book of the Law, to do them.*

And tho the Condition in which all by Nature are, is so miserable, yet that fallen Man is now under an utter Inability to help himself out of it, appears in that we are said to be,

1. *More Darkness*, Eph. 5. 8. & 1 Cor. 2. 14.
2. *To have a Heart of Stone*, Ezek. 36. 26.
3. *To be intralld under the dominion of Sin and Satan*, Acts 26. 18.
4. *To be dead in Sins and Trespasses*, Eph. 2. 1, 5.
5. *To be without Strength in spiritual things*, Rom. 5. 6.
6. *Man's carnal Mind is said to be Enmity against God*, Rom. 8. 7. *For 'tis not now subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be*, till it be effectually chang'd. And therefore Man's Recovery out of this sad Estate, is expressly said in Scripture to be a *Regeneration*, Tit. 3. 5. a *spiritual Resurrection*, a *quickening and raising from the Death of Sin to the Life of Grace*, John 5. 24, 25. Eph. 2. 1. a *new Creation*, and *God's own Workmanship*, Eph. 2. 10. By all which it evidently appears, that tho Man's Misery be from himself, yet his Help can be only from the free Grace of God.

C H A P. IV.

*Of the Covenant of Grace, and our Redemption
by CHRIST.*

BY the Fall of our first Parents, our wretched and miserable Apostacy in them from God, and that original Unrighteousness and Corruption that Sin brought into our Hearts and Natures; the distance between God and the Creature is now become so great, as that altho reasonable Creatures do owe an intire Obedience to their Creator, which they can never be discharg'd from, yet they are utterly disabled from paying and performing it, and have thereby depriv'd themselves of all Right and Title to that Happiness which God had promis'd upon the most just and reasonable Condition of their Obedience; and of ever having any farther Communion with him, or Enjoyment of him as their Blessedness and Reward. And thus Man must have remain'd for ever, perishing in that Deluge of Sin and Wrath, in those intolerable and endless Miseries, which were become his Portion; and under which both Soul and Body must have been tormented to all Eternity, had not the blessed God, by that stupendous and amazing Instance of Love and Condescension to his poor Creatures, found out a way for our Deliverance; having such Thoughts of Pity and Compassion towards us in that our lost and miserable Condition, that out of his own free and mere Good-pleasure, he determin'd to bring miserable Sinners again into a State of Reconciliation to himself, and of Salvation by a Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ: and in *Him* to lay the Foundation of a second Covenant, wherein Sinners may yet be safe and happy; and getting into this Ark, may be secur'd from that Deluge of Misery in which they must otherwise have been unavoidably overwhelm'd and perish'd. And in this way of entering into Covenant with his own Creatures, the blessed God hath evermore delighted to reveal and communicate himself to them. By this he hath open'd a Door

of Hope for us; and by getting into this Covenant it is, that we shall find Rest to our Souls, and be everlastingly happy: Of which Covenant, being now thro infinite Grace and Mercy well order'd in all things and sure, we may well say, and should do so, as Holy *David*, *This is all my Salvation, and all my Desire.*

The Lord might, on account of his Sovereignty over his Creatures, have requir'd their Duty, Subjection, and Obedience again on the severest Penalty that his Justice could have inflicted (if he had been pleas'd again to restore fallen Man) and have given him no other reason but this, *I am the Lord*; without renewing any Promise or Contract again with him: He might have bestow'd those Blessings likewise which he intended on Sinners, without making any such gracious Promises to them, as we find he has been pleas'd to make; and have glorify'd his Justice upon the Breach again of such a Covenant: but his absolute Commands would not have carry'd such Encouragements and Motives to our faithful Performance of it, as the gracious Promises of the second Covenant do. It hath therefore the Honour, by way of Eminency to be stil'd a Covenant of Grace, in which God hath manifested the Glory of his redeeming Grace and pardoning Mercy; and hath assur'd Believers coming sincerely under this Law of Grace, they shall be loosed for ever from under his Wrath and Curse; that tho their Obedience is imperfect, yet if sincere, it shall be accepted, and that Believers shall be dealt with from first to last, upon gracious Terms. We are now at a certainty, from our gracious God, in what way, every one of us may expect to receive the Blessings of Life and Salvation. He is pleas'd to enter into Bonds (as it were) with his Creatures, and to make himself Debtor to them by his own Promises, *Micah* 7. 10. Here is our sure Stay and Encouragement, an Anchor for us in the greatest Storms and Tempests; and we may (if Believers) in and thro Christ, the blessed Mediator of it, put in our Claim to what is promis'd as our own by a gracious Covenant, *2 Cor.* 4. 20. And this Grace of Faith, is not of our selves, but he is himself also the Author and Finisher of it, *Eph.* 2. 8. *Heb.* 12. 2. He has promis'd to give to all his Elect, ordain'd to Life, his holy Spirit, to make them willing, and enable them to believe.

It is now thro the Righteousness of another (the Lord Jesus Christ, the Blessed Mediator of this new and better Covenant) that the Gospel offers Salvation to Sinners; so that the humbled Soul, by Faith receiving and resting on Christ, is justify'd, and at peace with God, tho he be not perfectly Holy: and this is now the Privilege of the Gospel, that when we fail, yet upon our Repentance and returning to God, he is willing to accept us again; and the greatest Sins, if truly repented of thro Christ, shall not condemn us: the Law knows no such thing.

This Covenant is frequently set forth in the Scripture by the Name of a Testament, in reference to the Death of Jesus Christ the Testator, and to that everlasting Inheritance, which (with all things preparing them for, and belonging to it) is therein bequeath'd to Believers.

The Nature of this Covenant may be the better discern'd, by comparing it with the former Covenant, the Covenant of Works; and considering, both wherein they are alike, and wherein they differ.

1. God is the Author of them both, even the same [God.]

2. They agree in the Parties contracting and making Covenant together: God and Man are the Parties in both Covenants.

3. They agree in one common End; which is, that God may be glorify'd in his Creature, either in the Manifestation of his Justice or Mercy, according to the nature of the Covenant; and in both there is a Promise of Life and Blessedness.

4. In both Covenants, there is something requir'd on our parts, in order to the obtaining the Blessedness promis'd; tho the Grace working that in us, is freely bestow'd in the Covenant of Grace. Neither of the two Covenants promise Life absolutely, whether we believe or no, or whether we obey or no; but upon the Terms of Faith, and Obedience flowing from thence.

5. Both Covenants require a perfect Righteousness of us, in order to our obtaining the Blessedness promis'd. Life is not promis'd in either Covenant, but upon the bringing in a perfect Righteousness before God, either of our own, or of another's. The Covenant of Grace, as well as that of Works, will make this good, that no unrighteous Person shall enter into the Kingdom of God,

Rom.

Rom. 3. last. Herein the Gospel establishes the Law; they are not contrary the one to the other.

6. Both Covenants are in themselves unchangeable. The Covenant of Grace is an unchangeable Covenant; it is an everlasting Covenant, more unchangeable than the Covenant of the Day, and of the Night; more unmovable than Mountains that cannot be moved, *Isa. 54. 10.* and *Jer. 33. 20.* So likewise the Covenant of Works is an unchangeable Covenant: *Mat. 5. 18.* Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot of the Law shall fail. Tho now, in the State of Corruption, no Man can attain Life by the Covenant of Works; yet this is not because the Covenant is chang'd, but because we are chang'd, and cannot fulfil the Condition to which the Promise of Life was made: the Covenant stands fast, but we have not stood fast in the Covenant; it's now become impossible to us to fulfil it; *Rom. 8. 3.* Yea, it is the Unchangeableness and Stability of this Covenant which condemns all the World of sinful and ungodly Men, that continue Unbelievers. The Law hath said, *Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things, &c.* and the Soul that sinneth (and flies not to the Covenant of Grace) shall die. This word takes hold upon them, and condemns them: nay more, for the fulfilling of this Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ came down from Heaven, and became Man to fulfil that Righteousness of the Law, which was now become impossible for us to fulfil, *Rom. 8. 3.* So unchangeable is that Covenant, that rather than it shall not be fulfill'd, the Son of God must come down to do it. Thus we see the Agreement between these two Covenants: but the principal and more weighty Consideration is to set down the proper Differences between them, which are so exceeding great; lest by darkning and obscuring these, we should disannul the Nature of the Covenant of Grace, and turn it into a Covenant of Works, and mix Wine and Water together.

Differ. 1. They differ in the Condition of the Covenants: The one requires Doing, the other Believing; the one Works, the other Faith: one saith, *Do this and live*; the other says, *Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*; *Acts 16. 31.*

2. In the Covenant of Works, there was no Mediator; but in the Covenant of Grace, there is a Mediator coming between, to unite God and Man together; therefore the one is call'd, *Fœdus Amicitie*; the other, *Fœdus Misericordie*.

Christ is call'd, *Heb. 12. 24. The Mediator of the New Testament*: and *1 Tim. 2. 5. There is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus*. When the first Covenant was made, there was yet no Breach made between God and Man, and therefore no need of a Mediator to bring them together; but when the Covenant of Grace was made with Man, there was such a Breach made by Sin, that there was need of a third Party, to mediate between God and the fallen Sinner. Strangeness and Enmity follow'd Sin: Man fears and trembles to come before God, and God (being offended) cannot be at peace with Man, unless his Justice have full Satisfaction.

3. In the Covenant of Works, God's acceptance begins with the Work, and the Person is accepted for the Work's sake: But in the Covenant of Grace, God rewards the Work for the Person's sake, *Rom. 4. 4. Psal. 14. 15. Eph. 1. 6.* as God had respect to *Abel* first, and then to his Sacrifice. Which is matter of great Comfort unto all such as having made their Refuge unto Grace, have found Acceptance (thro Faith in Christ;) for the weakest Services, put up to God in Christ, are now accepted of him.

4. In the Covenant of Works, a Man is left to himself to stand by his own Strength; but in the Covenant of Grace, God undertakes for us, to keep us (thro Faith:) *Pet. 1. 5. Isa. 40. 29.* Hence it is, that some trusting in themselves, and their own Abilities, fade and fall away; when others, sensible of their own Weakness, and casting themselves on the Power of God, to be kept thereby, are by it preserv'd and upheld against all the Powers of Darkness which are against them; or if they fall, yet they rise again: *Rom. 6. 14.*

5. In the first Covenant God's highest End was to glorify his Justice; but in the new Covenant it is to glorify his Grace.

6. In the first Covenant, God deals alike with all that are alike in themselves; for he will deal justly with all: but Grace in this Covenant makes a difference, *Rom. 9.*

15. *Mat. 20. 14, 15.* Our own, is that which is due from God's Justice, which is Death, the Wages of Sin; but God's own is the Gift of his free Grace: as in the Case of *Jacob and Esau, Abel and Cain, Peter and Judas.*

7. One Sin alone broke the Covenant of Works; but in the Covenant of Grace there is Pardon obtainable for multiply'd Transgressions: *Isa. 55. 7. Let the Wicked forsake his way, &c.*

8. The Covenant of Works gave unto Man, as it were, some occasion to glory, if he had stood; but the Covenant of Grace cuts off from Man all pretence to glorying in himself, and engages him to give all the Glory entirely unto God: *Rom. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 31. Eph. 2. 9.*

9. The Covenant of Works (rested in, and trusted to) can never (in this State of Corruption that we now are in) work settled Peace, Comfort, and Quietness of Heart in any; tho he should walk as exactly as Flesh and Blood can attain unto, and build as confidently on this Foundation as he possibly may; as *Paul* whilst in his unregenerate Estate, *Phil. 3. 6.* But the Covenant of Grace, in and thro Christ, rested in, and trusted to, doth settle the Soul in Peace; *Rom. 10. 5—10.*

10. The Covenant of Works is reveal'd by the Light of Nature only, which teaches Men to look for Life and Righteousness by Works; and all Men by Nature have something of the Law written in their Hearts (tho Sin hath blotted out a great part of it) but the Covenant of Grace is not known but by the Revelation of the Spirit; *1 Cor. 2. 6, 7, 8. Mat. 16. 17. John 1. Mat. 11. 25.* which is promis'd to be given in this new and better Covenant.

11. The Covenant of Works was made with all Men, all being then in *Adam's* Loins; and he standing as a publick Person in the room of all his Children, when God made that Covenant with him: but the Covenant of Grace is made only with the Faithful, those that are given to Christ by the Father; *John 17. 11, 12.*

Thus having shew'd the difference between these two Covenants, we may easily see how groundless and unreasonable it would be for any to look for the Blessing of Life and Salvation, whilst under the first Covenant, that speaks nothing but Death and Terror to all the Sons of

of Adam, who are all of them Transgressors of it. But spiritual and eternal Life is the peculiar Blessing of the Covenant of Grace, made only with those that are given to Christ. Let not any therefore flatter themselves with vain and presumptuous Hopes, that he that made them will therefore save them: No, he that made us will have no compassion on us, so long as we remain under the first Covenant, an *impenitent and disobedient People*, Isa. 27. 11. All do not so much as hear of the Covenant of Grace, nor know it; and all that do hear of it, and have some knowledg of it, do not (thro Unbelief) enjoy the Blessings of it: *Mat. 13. 11. & 11. 25.* Therefore let us examine and make sure of an Interest in it. Sure I am, that I am by Nature under the Covenant of Works, but am I translated into the Covenant of Grace? Adam being under the Covenant of Works, lost himself wholly, together with all his Posterity, by his breaking of it. But those that are once engrafted into Christ, are safe, he having undertaken for their Sin: he saves himself, and all that belong to him; *Isa. 63. 8. John 17. 12.* Therefore let me inquire, whether I am indeed in him. See the safe Estate of those that are under the Covenant of Grace! Here is a safe Harbour; cast but anchor upon this Rock, and there is no danger: the Ship may be tossed, but cannot perish; as the Ship in which Christ was, *Mat. 8.* Such cannot come under the condemning Power of the Law any more, *Rom. 6.* It's true, the Gospel and Covenant of Grace hath its Commandments, as well as the Law and Covenant of Works; but withal it reveals the free Promise of Grace and of Righteousness, without Works, which the Law and Covenant of Works doth not. The great Command of the Covenant of Grace is, that we believe in the Name of the Son of God, that we may have Life by him; *1 John 3. 23.* Thereupon the Gospel is call'd *the Law of Faith*, as oppos'd to *the Law of Works*, *Rom. 3. 27.* And tho the Doctrine of Grace command the same Duties also as the Covenant of Works doth, as of Love, Fear, Obedience to the Commandments of God, and ratifies the Duties of the Law; yet here they are commanded in another manner, and for another end than in the Covenant of Works: not as the Matter of our Justification, for that is in Christ alone; but as Testimonies

monies of our Duty and Thankfulness for the great Mercy of God, in our free Justification by Grace.

Thus much of the Differences between the Covenant of Works and of Grace; which Differences are carefully to be observ'd and kept inviolable: for by confounding these two Covenants, we should bring a Confusion into all Religion; as the Papists have done, making these Covenants to differ only in Measure of Perfection, and in Degree: teaching that there is but one way of Justification in both, and that is by Works; and so in effect they make them all one. We must therefore the more carefully keep these Differences unconfounded; for these two Covenants are as different in their Nature as Heaven and Earth.

Now in speaking more particularly of the Covenant of Grace, we may observe that for substance it was one and the same in all Ages of the Church, tho diversly administered, before and after the coming of Christ: From *Adam* to *Noah*, from *Noah* to *Abraham*, from *Abraham* to *Moses*, from *Moses* to *David*, and so on to Christ; and from Christ to the end of the World, without change or alteration, as to the substance of it. It being made with *Adam* immediately after the Fall, the Lord was pleas'd to renew it with *Abraham*; and it was a new declar'd by *Moses* and the Prophets, till at last it was confirm'd by the Death of Christ, the great Promise and Testator of it. Yet this Covenant has been administered in a different manner in the several Ages of the Church, under the Old and New Testament; and thence it had the Denomination of the Old and New Covenant, as in *Heb. 8*. That the Platform or Doctrine of the New Covenant between God and Man, was evermore the same in all Ages of the World from the Fall of *Adam* to this day, and will continue so, will appear if we compare together the Preachers of both the Editions of this Covenant; and we shall find, that for substance they all preach'd but one Doctrine; all coming from one Spirit, leading on in one Way, and directing to one End. The Apostle *Paul*, was a Preacher of the New Testament (as he testifies, *2 Cor. 3. 6*.) as the Prophets were of the Old; yet what he preach'd was taught before by *Moses* and the Prophets under the first Edition of this Covenant, as *Acts 26. 22*. he himself assures us. And hence

hence it is, that in *Eph. 2. 20.* the *Prophets and Apostles* are both join'd together as one Foundation for the Church to build upon; they both leading us, by Consent of Doctrine, to that one Foundation which is laid, which is Jesus Christ; *1 Cor. 3. 11.* The Apostle *Paul* prov'd the Doctrine which he preach'd, by Concurrence of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which are the Writings of *Moses* and the *Prophets*; *Acts 17. 2, 3.* *1 Cor. 5. 3, 4.* This may yet more evidently appear, in that,

1. They both spring from the same Fountain of Grace and Mercy towards lost Sinners. That the new Covenant doth so, will easily be granted; and if we look back, where the first Stream of this Covenant brake forth, which was to our first Parents in Paradise, we shall find the old Covenant also did so. When they by their vile Apostacy from God, and turning after Satan, had brought themselves under the Wrath and Curse of God, what else but free Mercy and Grace did move the Lord now, to make known to them that Promise, concerning the Seed of the Woman that should break the serpent's head? Here was the Substance of the whole Covenant of Grace; the Manifestation whereof sprang from free and mere Grace and Mercy towards ungrateful Man. So also when God first manifested himself to *Abraham*, to take him into Covenant with himself, he was an Idolater, *Josh. 24. 2.* when the Grace of God first laid hold upon him, and had nothing in himself to move the Lord to do it. So likewise *Israel*, what were they above other People of the Earth, when the Lord separated them to be a peculiar People to himself? They were a stiff-necked People, as God tells them, *Deut. 9. 5.* and therefore his Love to them was altogether free, loving them because he loved them, there being no cause thereof but in himself; *Deut. 7. 7, 8.* compare *Rom. 9. 15, 16.* And so *Samuel* tells *Israel*, that it was the Lord's Good-pleasure to make them his People, *Sam. 12. 22.* Not any thing in themselves, but the mere Good-pleasure of his Goodness; *2 Thess. 1. 12.*

2. There was the same Blessings and saving Privileges propounded to them in the old Covenant as in the new. For they had God for their God then, as we have now; for so God spake to *Abraham*, *Gen. 17. 7.* *I will be a God unto thee:* And so to *Israel*, *Psal. 50. 7.* *O Israel, I*

am God, even thy God, Levit. 26. 12. Which Promise, that contains the greatest Blessings, is still the same: 2 Cor. 6. to the end. *I will be your God, and you shall be my People.* Hence Paul and David use the same Language, Rom. 3. 29. & Psal. 63. 1. *O God, thou art my God.* They had the same Remission of Sins (thro Christ the great Sacrifice that was then to be offer'd) that we have; God manifesting himself to them as well as to us, to be a God gracious and merciful, abundant in Goodness, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin; Exod. 34. 6, 7. Isa. 43. 25. Micah 7. 18. This the Faithful then pray'd for under the Old Testament, as we do; as appears by Solomon's Prayer, 1 Kings 8. 30, 34, 36. So Psal. 51. 1, 2. And they obtain'd what they believ'd and pray'd for. Thus Abraham, who being justify'd, had his Sins forgiven, Rom. 4. and David found the Sense thereof in his own Soul, Psal. 32. 5. *Thou forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin.* So also Hezekiah, as himself expresseth, Isa. 38. 17. Tho they were then under the Tutorage and Government of legal Rudiments, which we are freed from, and were but as in their Minority, yet they were Children as well as we. So the Church, Doubtless thou art our Father, Isa. 63. 16. & Deut. 14. 1.

3. They had the same Mediator between God and them as we have, Jesus Christ, by whom the Blessings of the Covenant are to be enjoy'd. Christ was propounded to Adam in that Promise, *The Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpent's head:* and to Abraham, in that Promise of a Seed, *in whom all the Nations of the Earth should be blessed,* Gen. 22. 18. In which Promise, Abraham foreseeing Christ, rejoic'd, John 8. 58. To this Mediator Job look'd, when he said, *I know that my Redeemer liveth,* Job 19. 25, 26. And according to this we read in the Gospel, that our Blessed Saviour, at his Resurrection, rais'd up together with himself, many of the Saints that had been dead under the former Covenant, Mat. 27. 52. to shew that the Benefit of his Mediation, Death, and Resurrection, did belong to them as well as unto us. *Christ is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever,* Heb. 13. 8. All the Ceremonial Rites and Types under the Old Testament pointed to him; and if they had benefit by them, it was as they were led by them to Christ, in whom they had their Accomplishment

ment. Hence he is call'd the Mediator of the New Testament, in respect of his actual and personal Confirmation of it by his own Blood, and not in respect of the Virtue and Efficacy of it, which took away also the Sins that were committed under the Old, of which *Moses* was only the typical Mediator. One Covenant pointed at Christ to come, the other as already come. And by virtue of that Blood of Christ and his Mediation, it is, that all the Children of God, in all Ages of the World, have been pardon'd, sanctify'd, and sav'd: *Acts. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 15. 22. John 5. 12.*

4. There was and is the same Terms and Condition in both Covenants, in the new and old Edition of it; and that is Faith in Christ, who is the Mediator of them both: there being no other means of coming to him, and enjoying him, but by Faith. *Object.* The Condition of the former Covenant under the Old Testament, seems to be Doing; as in *Exod. 19. 5.* and other places.

Ans. We must know, that when Doing is made the Condition of that Covenant, Works are not consider'd apart by themselves, as separated from Faith, but as the Effects and Fruits of Faith going before them: as *Abraham*, who from the Lord's All-sufficiency, and by Faith therein, was encourag'd to walk before him in Uprightness; *Gen. 17. 1.* Thus the Scripture testifies of many, that they believ'd, under the old Dispensation of the Covenant; as *Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, David, Moses*, and others, whose Faith is spoken of and commended, and set before us for our example to walk by, *Heb. 11.* throughout. Indeed, many under the former Covenant sought Righteousness by the Works of the Law, and not by Faith; as too many now do under the New Testament: they seek it in the same way of Works as they did; *Rom. 10. 3.* Which is their Error and Sin; but it is not the Doctrine of the Covenant which teacheth them so, but their dangerous Mistake of the Covenant; and so it was then. They had the Promise of Life made to Faith, as in *Heb. 2. 4. The Just shall live by Faith.* And it was the same Doctrine that was taught by all the Prophets, *Acts. 10. 43.* And they were often blamed for their Unbelief, as *Deut. 32. 20. Psal. 78. 22.* They believ'd not in God, and trust'd not in his Salvation. See

2 Kings 17. 14. And in Rom. 9. 31. 12. the Apostle plainly implies that Christ, as a Corner-stone, was propounded to them, to build upon him by Faith; tho they thro their wilful Unbelief stumbled at him as at a Stumbling-stone. They had also Circumcision to be to them a Seal of the Righteousness of that Faith which was requir'd of them; Rom. 4. 11.

By this Grace of Faith it was, that they overcame the World; that *Moses* despis'd the Honour of *Pharaoh's* Court, and refus'd to be call'd the Son of *Pharaoh's* Daughter; which he would not have done, if he had not by Faith looked at Christ, and those better things that are to come: Heb. 11. 24. The like may be said of those mention'd in this Chapter, ven. 13, 14, 15, 16. Who overcame the World, and the Prince which rules in the World, by the same means, even by Faith; for this is the Victory by which we resist Satan, 1 Pet. 5. 9. And overcome the World, 1 John 5. 4. And that they were at last broken off from this Covenant of Grace, was their Unbelief; Rom. 11. 20.

5. The same Spirit of Grace was also promis'd by the old Covenant as is by the new. There is but one Spirit in all the People of God, Eph. 4. 4. and all are sanctify'd by the same Spirit of Holiness given unto them, Hag. 2. 5. Hence *David* pray'd, that God would not take his holy Spirit from him, Psa. 51. 11. & 2 Cor. 4. 13. The Apostle says, that he had the same Spirit of Faith as *David* had before.

Obj. It is said, That the Holy Ghost was not given till Christ was glorify'd, John 17. 39.

Ans. By the Holy Ghost there mention'd, we must understand either his extraordinary Gifts, as it is taken, Acts 10. 44, 46. & 19. 5. or else the more abundant Measure of the Gifts of the Spirit, which are given more abundantly now, than formerly they were.

6. Those under the former Covenant had the same Laws and Rules of Life to walk by, as we have, and we as they, even the same Royal Law; James 2. 8. Which is an everlasting Law, to continue as a Rule of Life for all the People of God, from the beginning to the end of the World. The formal Respect indeed of a Covenant limiting the Promise of Life to a legal Doing, is now done away to those that are in Christ; but the Direction

of

and our Redemption by CHRIST. 51

of the Law, as a Rule, abider for ever. This was left to us by our Blessed Lord, who tells us, he came *not to destroy, but to fulfil it*; Mat. 5. 17. To this, his own Practice likewise agreed: when tempted by Satan, he made use of the Commandments of the Law, by them repelling those fiery Darts; *Mat. 4. 7, 10.* And if the same Spirit be in us that was in Christ, we may well walk by the same Rule which he did; who was filled with the Spirit above measure, and anointed with the Oil of Grace above all others: *John 3. 34. Psal. 45.* What he did indeed was for our Justification, and our perfect Righteousness is laid up in him alone: but we must consider, that he is also the Pattern that we are to imitate in all his imitable Perfections, and that he is propos'd as our Example as well as our Righteousness; *1 Pet. 2. 23. John 13. 14, 15. Phil. 2. 5, 7. Eph. 5. 2.* The Apostle Paul is so far from pleading any Exemption or Freedom from it, that tho in respect of some indifferent things, he was either without or under Law, according to the Condition of those that he convers'd with; yet he asserts himself to be under the moral Law to Christ: as if he could not approve his Subjection to Christ otherways, but by subjecting himself to his Law; and he professeth himself to be under it the more for Christ's sake, *Gal. 6. 2.* And in *Rom. 7. 25.* he testifies of himself, that in his Mind he served the Law of God, and delighted in it in the inner Man. In *James 2. 8.* it's call'd a *Royal Law*, because it hath a Kingly Power and Authority over all Flesh, and hath Power over the Consciences of all living: and therefore much more must have power to command and rule in the Hearts and Lives, and in the Consciences of God's People. Therefore our Blessed Saviour hath assur'd us, That if we break the least of these Commands, and shall teach Men so, we shall be call'd the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. See *Mat. 5. 17, 18, 19, 20.* Now

That we may rightly conceive how the Law is abolish'd, and how it continues, we must consider it thus: The Law indeed as oppos'd to the Gospel, in respect to our Justification, is abolish'd to those that believe, thro the perfect and spotless Righteousness of Christ. But consider'd now in the hand of Christ, and as consenting with the Gospel in the Doctrine of Sanctification; thus

52 Of the Covenant of Grace,

it continues, and will do always so, as a Guide and Rule even to those that believe.

Those under the Old Testament and we under the New, have the same Rules of Life to walk by (the Ceremonial and some part of their Judicial Laws excepted, which were but for a time, and peculiar in that time to the Jews, and not pertaining to us :) but the moral Law being that eternal Will of God which all Flesh are to be guided and govern'd by, belongs no less to us than them, and is never to be abrogated so long as Heaven and Earth endure.

7. Those under the Old Testament were made Partakers of the same Salvation as we : which was hinted to them by *Enoch's* Translation to a Life in Heaven. And this *Jacob* profess'd in that affectionate Expression of his, *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord*; Gen. 49. 18. *Moses* pronounc'd *Israel* a blessed People, *saved by the Lord*; Deut. 33. 29. See also *Isa.* 33. 22.

It may perhaps be objected, that these Scriptures speak of temporary Salvations and Deliverances. Which is true in part, and that they are herein imply'd; but not these only, but as wrap'd in, together with eternal Salvation, in the Volume of the same Covenant. Of which *Salvation, Canaan* was a Type; for that being grounded upon this Foundation, That God was their God, therefore whatever Salvation God communicates to his covenanted People, they are all folded up together, both temporary and eternal. And thus the Scripture speaks, *Isa.* 45. 17. *Israel shall be saved with an everlasting Salvation.* And Chap. 51. 6. *My Salvation shall be for ever, saith the Lord.* *David* assur'd himself, he should be satisfy'd with God's Image, when he should awake in the Morning of the Resurrection, *Psal.* 17. ult. And what *Christ* asserts concerning *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, Mat. 8. 12. doth evidently import as much. What the Hope of the Body of Believers under the Old Testament was, we may see in *Heb.* 11. 13.—17. as in many other places in the Scripture: by which it is evident, they had Heaven in their Eye; yea, when they were even in the Land of Promise, they counted themselves but as Pilgrims and Strangers in it, expecting a better place to go to, even an heavenly, a City whose Builder and Maker is God.

Farther,

Farther, they had the same Gospel preach'd to them; the Apostle affirming the same, *Heb. 4. 2. & 1 Pet. 4. 6.* The Sacraments had the same Signification as ours have, and they had the same spiritual Blessings set before them; *1 Cor. 10. 2, 3.* Their outward Signs were diverse from ours, but they agreed with them in their Signification.

Obj. The Apostle affirms, that the New Covenant is not as the Old, *Heb. 8. 8.*

Ans. In respect of its Manifestation, and the Manner of its Dispensation, the New and Old Covenant differ; but the Substance or Matter of them is wholly the same. *Rebecca* veil'd, and *Rebecca* unveil'd, was the same, tho in some respect she was not; the same in Person, but not in Attire. So the Covenant, as it was of old administered, being veil'd over with Types and Shadows, and the new Covenant unveil'd, is the same, tho in some respect it is not: it is the same in Substance, but not in Administration.

Obj. 2. The Old Covenant is said to vanish, *Heb. 8. ult.*

Ans. It vanishes in respect of the Types and Shadows under which the Body lay hid; but for the Substance of it, it vanisheth not, but is an everlasting Covenant abiding for ever.

Obj. 3. The Old Covenant was broken, but the New cannot be broken.

Ans. Some are in Covenant internally, by virtue of inward and effectual Calling, from the Heart embracing the Covenant which is offer'd to them; and by these the Covenant is never broken, whether we speak of the New or of the Old. But there are others which are in Covenant only outwardly, externally conforming themselves to the Terms of it as propounded, as many of those did, *Exod. 24. 3, 4, &c.* but never clave to it in Heart and Spirit. Now these may break it, as *Israel* did before; and many others do the same now, as appears, *Heb. 10. 29.* as *Demas* did.

From what hath been said, we may well infer that the Scriptures of the Old Testament are still of the same use to us, as containing the same Substance of Doctrine as the New does: both Testaments being like the two Cherubims in the Temple, which had their Faces looking towards the Ark, and were beaten out of one piece of Gold; *Exod. 37. 7.* And so do both Testaments look

towards Christ, leading us to the Faith and Obedience of Christ. The two Testaments are like the two Breasts of the Church, both of them full of that sincere Milk that is sweet, and nourishing, and wholesom, for those that suck and lie at them; *Cant. 4. 5.* looking for that spiritual Food and Nourishment, that by Faith may be drawn from them.

Lastly, The New Covenant as well as the Old is made with the Faithful and their Seed; so that the Children of believing Parents have the same Right and Interest in the one as they had in the other. And as it cannot be deny'd, that the old Covenant before Christ included both Parents and the Seed of believing Parents taken into Covenant; as appears throughout the whole Current of the Scripture of the Old Testament; so it may also be made manifest from several Parts of the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testaments, that the Covenant belongs to the Seed of all true Believers, under each of the Dispensations of it: as in *Isa. 59. ult.* the Lord makes this Promise to his People; *I will make this Covenant with them, saith the Lord, My Spirit which is upon thee, and my Words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy Seed, nor out of the mouth of thy Seed's Seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.* And that this is a Gospel-Promise, appears by comparing *Rom. 11. 26.* with *Isa. 59. 20.* So also in *Isa. 65. 23.* the Promise is made to them and their Offspring with them; which is a Promise of the New Testament, after the creating the new Heaven and new Earth. So also in *Gal. 3. 14.* it's said *the Blessing of Abraham comes now upon the Gentiles.* And what was the Blessing promis'd to Abraham? even this, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy Seed.* So in *Gal. 3. 17.* the Apostle says, *The Covenant which was confirm'd before of God in Christ could not be disannull'd;* which was the Covenant made with Abraham, as ver. 14. shews: and that was, *to be a God to him and to his Seed.* And now if Abraham's Covenant included both Parents and Children, and if that Covenant was confirm'd in Christ, or with respect to Christ as it was, then that Covenant including Children, neither is nor can be disannull'd: and much less did Christ himself by his own coming dissolve that Covenant, made and confirm'd in and with respect

to himself. For the Apostle tells us, he came to confirm the Promises made to the Fathers, *Rom. 15. 8.* and that all the Promises of God, which are made in him, are *Yea and Amen*; *2 Cor. 1. 20.* And therefore doubtless that Promise to *Abraham*, and to his Seed, continues still in force in these days of the Gospel, as well as before; being made and confirm'd in Christ, and had in God's Intention a respect to Gospel-times. And accordingly the Lord requires of *Abraham*, and in him of all Believers, that he reach his Household, and charge his Children to keep the way of the Lord: that so in this way the Lord might bring upon *Abraham* that Blessing which he had promis'd him, even to be a God unto him and to his Seed, *Gen. 17. 7.* Thus God by the Promise provokes to the Duty, and we by walking in the Duty are to expect the Promise. It is as if the Lord had said in this manner; "I will be a God unto your Seed, and therefore I command you this thing, thus to bring them up for me, that they may know me, and fear my Name." The sweet Connection and Relation which is between the Promise and the Commandment, one to the other, shews that to God's covenanted People they go both together, and the Extent of the one is as large as the other. They are both Branches of the same Covenant, and therefore must be either taken or refus'd together. God doth not divide his Covenant one part from another, so neither must we; but both must be receiv'd together. But always remember, that as God requires no Duty of us, except he adds gracious Promises thereto; so he makes no Promise, except there is a Duty (either express'd or imply'd) which leads to the Promise. The Promise is the Ground of the Duty, and the Duty is the Way to the Promise: and therefore what God hath join'd together, may not by us be divided asunder. And if we, as they, embrace the Duty of the Covenant, as we are under the greatest Obligation to do; then we also, as they, have part in the Promise made in *Abraham* to Believers and their Seed: otherwise we make the Covenant to be less gracious to us in these days of Grace under the Gospel, than it was to those who lived under the legal Administration of it; which would be altogether unsuitable to the Gospel-Dispensation.

What has been therefore said concerning the Identity or Sameness of the two Covenants, lays a good foundation for communicating Baptism to the Infant-Children of Believers: For if the old and new Covenant be in substance the same (as it hath been made evidently appear that they are) and that Children are within the new Covenant, as they were within the old; then there can be no sufficient Reason to deprive Children of the Seal of the Covenant now, more than before: That Argument drawn from Circumcision to Baptism, will stand against all the Batteries made against it, so long as the Heaven and Earth endure, and which may fully confute that great Error of the Anabaptists in this point. The Covenants are the same, and the Signs of the Covenants (Circumcision and Baptism) are in signification the same also. And the Children of the Faithful, all that are true Believers, have the same relation and right to the Covenant now, as they had before. And as this may be great encouragement to Christian Parents to educate their Children carefully and faithfully for God, who hath taken them into Covenant with himself, as *Abraham* did; and to consider them not so much our own as the Lord's, who tells us *we have born them to him*, and that they are *his Children*, Ezek. 16. 20, 21. and that therefore our Care should be, not to bring them up for our selves alone, but for him; that they being in his Covenant, the Name of his Grace may be glorify'd in them: So we should live in the Exercise of Faith towards the Covenant and Promise of God, waiting upon him (in this way of our Duty, with respect to our Children) for his Blessing upon them. And this may serve for a Caution to the Children of believing and pious Parents, to take heed of forsaking the Covenant of their Fathers; that they despise not the Blessing (as *Esau*) this is a despising of Grace it self: and to such, a double Woe would belong; for they thus rejecting Grace, Grace would reject them: and thus they would forsake their own Mercy! But let such Children take great encouragement from hence, to improve the Covenant which God hath made with their Fathers, for the Good of themselves that are their Children, and springing from them with whom the Covenant is made. In confidence hereof, they may draw nigh to God with much Hope

of Acceptance, the Promise of the Covenant extending even to themselves; and may therefore plead for Mercy to be shew'd them by this Covenant, as has been usual with the Saints in Scripture, *Isa. 54. 1, 2.* and see *Gen. 46. 3.* Their Names are in God's Testament; let not such Children therefore be wanting to themselves, but sue for the Legacy of Grace bequeath'd unto them.

What remains farther, is to shew the true Differences between the Old and New Covenant in the Dispensation of them. For tho' as has been evidenc'd, they agree and are the same for the substance of them, yet in these four following respects especially they differ.

I. The Covenant of Grace, in the former Dispensation of it, was more burdenson and heavy; but is now made more easy: *Acts. 15. 10. Col. 2. 20.* So *Gal. 4. 3.* the Apostle comparing the State of the Church then and now, he saith they were in a kind of Bondage, in respect of us under the Gospel. Therefore Christ saith, *Mat. 11. 29. Take my Yoke upon you, for my Yoke is easy and my Burden is light.* He hath taken off that Burden of the Ceremonial Law, that we need not be burdend with it.

Particularly, 1. The Burden of their costly Sacrifices, which were to be offer'd upon the touching of any unclean thing; as a Bullock, or Lamb, &c.

2. They had also long and tedious Journies to *Jerusalem*, which lay almost at one end of *Canaan*; and thither all the Males were to go thrice a year, to appear before God: *Deut. 16. 16.*

3. They were restrain'd from many Liberties which we enjoy: we are allow'd the use of many Creatures for Meat, which they was not.

4. They were ty'd to the Observation of many Days, the New Moons, and many Ceremonial Sabbaths, which we are not. But now the Yoke is made more easy; therefore Christ compares the Jewish Church to a Child in his Nonage, *that is under Tutors and Governours till the time appointed by the Father.* And these Burdens are now remov'd from us under the Gospel-Dispensation of the Covenant: which should teach us with more Freedom and Willingness to offer up those spiritual Sacrifices to God which he calls for at our hands.

II. The Covenant was then reveal'd more darkly and obscurely, but now the Dispensation of it is more clear and evident, as the Sun shining at Noon-day, *Rom. 16. 25, 26.* since the Coming of our Saviour Christ, *Eph. 2. 4, 5. Col. 2. 26.* Particularly,

1. The Promise of eternal Life was darkly cover'd over, and but rarely and in express Terms mention'd to them: it was shadow'd out to them in the Promise of inhabiting in the Land of *Canaan*, and the threatening of eternal Death was typify'd out by the threatening of Exclusion out of it; *Hos. 9. 3.* When they should be driven into Captivity, it was a Type of their going into Hell, if they return'd not to the Lord, to walk with him in his Covenant. Hence those Promises of *inheriting the Land, and dwelling in the Earth*, *Psal. 37. 11.* which typify'd another and better Inheritance in Heaven. Hence it was, *Jacob* charg'd his Sons not to bury him in *Egypt*, but to carry him into *Canaan*, *Gen. 49. 29.* So *Joseph*, *Gen. 50. 24, 25.*

2. Christ, his Person, and Offices, were but darkly reveal'd to them in respect to what they are to us. He was shadow'd out to them in Types, and Figures, and dark Prophecies; and that he should be God and Man in One Person, was darkly reveal'd to them under the Old Testament: His Mediation was typify'd by *Moses's* Being between God and the People; his Priesthood by *Melchisedeck* among the *Canaanites*, and *Aaron* among the *Jews*; and his Sacrifice of himself, by their Sacrifices. His Prophetical Office was shadow'd by *Moses*, who reveal'd the Will of God to the People. Hence *Deut. 18. 18.* which is apply'd to Christ, *Acts 3. 22.* His Kingly Office was typify'd by *David* and *Solomon*, *Luke 1. 31.* But that these things were dark to them, we may perceive by the Disciples Speeches to Christ, who knew not how he should execute these Offices; they knew not that he should die, they dreamt of an earthly Kingdom, they saw Christ under a Veil, but we see him with open Face, more clearly; *2 Cor. 3. ult.*

3. The Benefits that come by Christ were not so clearly made known to them, as to us. Justification was only signify'd by the Blood of the Sacrifices, *Exod. 24. 7, 8.* so Sanctification by the Water of Purification. That Christ is our Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification,

tion, and Redemption, were but darkly propounded to them, their Light was but like the Dawning of the Day: Hence that of Christ, *Mat. 13. 16, 17. Blessed are your Eyes, for they see, &c.*

Now the reason of this might be, (1.) Because the Work of our Redemption was not yet accomplish'd; and as the Light of the Sun is less before its rising, so Christ, before his rising and appearing in the World, was not so fully known as since.

(2.) The Church was then in its Minority, but now is of full Age, *Gal. 4. 1, 2.* Therefore the Lord now (as a Father to his Child when grown up) reveals his Purpose and Will more clearly to it.

(3.) It was meet it should be so, that this Glory should be reserv'd to Christ himself, he being the great Prophet of the Church; that he should himself reveal more to the World than ever was known before, and make known those deep things, which were hid with God, to his Church and People. Only we may observe, that the farther the Times were from Christ's Coming, the less Light they had; and the nearer to Christ, the more Light sprung up. The Promise to *Eve* was more dark, but more clear to *Abraham*, and still more clear to *David*.

And this might be not only as Christ is the Light of the World, the nearer his Coming, the greater Light appear'd (as was said before;) but hereby the Minds of People would be the more stir'd up to look and wait for him, and a better Entertainment in the World might have been expected. There was also, before the Law was given, less sense of Sin; but as *That* increas'd by the Revelation of the Law, so there was a more clear Discovery of *Christ* to them.

III. They differ'd in respect of Power and Efficacy: The former Dispensation of the Covenant was comparatively weak. The Apostle says, *Heb. 7. 18, 19.* the Commandment going before was disannul'd, by reason of the Weakness of it; it was not then simply and absolutely weak and unprofitable, so that it could not communicate Life and Salvation to any: but comparatively, in respect of the lively and powerful Communication of it, now since the Coming of Christ, under the Gospel-Dispensation of it. Hence *Gal. 4. 9.* they are call'd
weak

weak and beggarly Elements. The Spirit was not then given in that large measure as now, *because Christ was not then glorify'd,* John 7. 39. And because the Spirit was given in a less measure, therefore those Ordinances were less profitable: the liberal pouring out of the Spirit was reserv'd to the time of Christ's Ascension, that it might be known it is from Christ glorify'd that we receive so great a Blessing. *John 10. 7. If I go not away (says our Blessed Lord) the Holy Ghost will not come. When Christ ascended, he gave Gifts (a Fulness of Gifts) unto Men,* Eph. 4. 8, 9. then the Spirit was shed down abundantly, which was before more sparingly; *Tir. 3. 6.*

1. There was less Power of Faith in the Saints before Christ: when the Doctrine of Faith was more fully reveal'd, then Faith it self was more reveal'd in the Hearts and Lives of the People of God; *Gal. 3. 23.*

2. The Spirit of Love was less in them than now; for according to the Measure of Faith, so is our Love: the less they knew of the Loving-kindness of God towards them in Christ, the less they loved. Hence it is said, *Gal. 4. 6, 7. God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into our Hearts, crying, Abba, Father.* They were then drawn by the Terrors of the Law, more than by the Promises of Grace; and it was a more servile Spirit which wrought in them.

3. They had a less Measure of Comfort to support and carry them on against the Discouragements and Troubles they met with. Christ is call'd the Consolation of *Israel,* Luke 2. 25. And the more we have of Christ imparted to us, the more means of Comfort we have: Hence our Saviour says, *These things I say unto you, that your Joy may be full.*

IV. The Covenant of Grace was reveal'd only to one Nation, the Jews; but now it is extended to the Gentiles also, and free to be reveal'd unto all Nations. It was a long time that the Gentiles knew nothing of the Covenant between God and Man, but walked in Darkness, and in the Vanity of their Minds; and are therefore call'd, *the Gentiles which knew not God,* 1 Thess. 4. 5. and *Gentiles in the Flesh,* Eph. 2. 11. and said to be *without Christ, without Promise, without Covenant, and without Hope,* Eph. 2. 12. for it is Christ that is our Hope. The things of God, by which Life and Salvation are convey'd,

convey'd, were appropriated to the Jews alone, *John* 5. 17. *Deut.* 33. 4. *Rom.* 9. 4. To them pertain'd the Covenants and the Promises, &c. Thence also the Gospel, in the first Dispensation of it, was promised to them, and preach'd to them; and from them came to the Gentiles, *John* 4. 22. *Salvation is from the Jews*. Before Christ's coming, they were the only People of God (except some few Gleanings of the rest of the Nations, as the first Fruits of the rest that should after be call'd) but now at the coming of Christ the Gospel is publish'd to every Creature, or is free to be so, *Mat.* 28. 19. It is now made manifest, tho before it was kept secret; God was known then in *Israel*, but now his Name is great in all the World. The Gentiles, that were far off, are now made nigh by the Blood of Christ, *Eph.* 2. 13. The Covenant is now reveal'd to all. It was foretold by *Noah*, *Gen.* 9. 27, &c. the Foundation of it laid in *Abraham's* calling out of *Ur* (where he worshipp'd strange Gods, *Josh.* 24. 2.) into the Land of *Canaan*; and continu'd till Christ's Ascension, which was about eighteen hundred Years after.

This the Lord was pleas'd to do, to shew the Freedom of his Grace, in which he is not bound to any, but may reveal his Grace to whom he will, and shew Mercy where he will shew Mercy. The Lord chose to manifest his Grace to the Jews, as a Pattern of his free Election of Grace; and then reveal'd his Covenant to the Gentiles, to make his Grace the more conspicuous and glorious, in extending it self to such a rejected and forsaken People: *Rom.* 11. 32. He hath shut up all in Unbelief, that he might have Mercy upon all; and hereby the Riches of his Grace in Christ was more glorify'd: *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 66. 19.

Now from such a different Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, we may learn many useful Lessons; and should labour to make a right Improvement of it. We may learn hence,

1. Humility. Let us remember our low Estate, who were Gentiles in the Flesh; let us remember the Rock from whence we were hewen, the wild Nature of that Olive which we grew upon: which should make us humble and lowly in our own Eyes.

2. To be truly thankful: - That whereas our Fathers sat in Darkness for many hundred Years together; yet the Grace of God is reveal'd to us: that he hath made known his Covenant, which was kept secret from Ages before, who would have been glad to have seen and heard the things that we do. What do we owe to the Lord for this great Mercy! Let us praise and glorify him for all the Riches of his Grace, which he hath shew'd to us under the Gospel; that being eas'd of that Burden, that lay upon the Church and People of God, formerly under that Dispensation of the Covenant, we should now with the more Freedom and Willingness offer up those spiritual Sacrifices unto God, which he calls for at our hands; seeing the Yoke of the Ceremonial Law is taken off from us, and the Lord hath given us the Covenant of his Grace without those Burdens that the Jewish Church, under the former Dispensation, and before the coming of Christ, were under. If yet we count those spiritual Services, which he requires of us, to be a Burden to us, how provoking may this be? The lesser our Burden is, the greater is the Sin, if we serve not the Lord with a cheerful Heart in the Services he requires of us.

How thankfully should we accept and prize these Days of the Son of Man, wherein Christ hath so clearly reveal'd the Covenant of his Grace to us, when many Kings and Princes have desir'd to see the things that we see, and have not seen them? nay, how many in other Nations are yet depriv'd of them? *Abraham* saw Christ, but it was afar off; the *Israelites* saw him, but he was then veil'd: but now we see him reveal'd clearly to us. As therefore God promiseth it as a Blessing, let us count it so. Christ hath taken the Veil from before his Face, and saith, *Behold me, behold me, O ye Sons of Men!* *II. 65. 1.* Let us labour to grow up in the Knowledge of the Covenant, and of the Blessings of it. We should not now be ignorant of what God hath promised on his part, nor what he requires on ours. If we have any Intimation of a Legacy given us in some rich Man's Will, how careful are we to enquire into it? And how much more solicitous and studious should we be, to be more and more acquainted with this Testament, and to know the Benefits thereby to be receiv'd, and to live by Faith in them,

them, lest we receive God's Grace in vain, and be guilty of great Contempt thereof? In vain should the Sun rise and give Light, if we shut our Eyes, and will not see it.

But seeing we are now under such a Dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, wherein the Veil is taken away, and Christ is reveal'd so clearly to us in his Person and Offices, and in all his saving Benefits; that the Spirit is now given and pour'd out in a larger measure, and the Doctrine of Faith more fully reveal'd to us under the Gospel: Let it stir us up to walk in more Power and Fruitfulness, according to the Seasons of Grace wherein we live. Where there is more given, there will be more requir'd: as God hath committed more to us than to the Saints formerly, let us bring forth more Fruit, or else the greater will our Account be. It will not be enough for us to say, these Infirmitie were in the People of God formerly; *Abraham, David*, and other Saints sinned thus formerly; and therefore tho we sin in the same kind, we may attain Life as they did: the Covenant offereth us more Grace; it is dispensed in more Power and Efficacy; and their Slips are recorded for our Caution, and are far from being any Warrant to us to do the like. Labour to be fill'd with the Spirit of Power, and of a sound Mind. *Phil. 14. 12, 13.* the Apostle says, *I can do all things thro the Power of Christ.* We must not be Infants and Babes, but growing up to be Men in Christ, that the Power of Christ may appear to dwell in us. There is Power enough and Strength in him, and we have the Promise of all that Grace that is in Christ to supply our Wants withal; and as we should labour to be fill'd with the Spirit, so we should endeavour to express the Power of it in our Conversation, to subdue our Corruptions, and to set our Feet upon the Necks of those Tyrants, that have risen up against us, and fought against our Souls. Being fill'd with the Power of Faith, let us not shrink and fail under Afflictions, if God call us thereto; but rest upon the faithful Covenant of God, who hath promised us all that is truly good for us both in this Life, and for ever in the Life to come: *2 Tim. 1. 8.* Let us labour to be fruitful in all Goodness, endeavouring to do good to all, and to be Patterns of Goodness and Holiness to others; growing up to the Fulness

64 Of the Covenant of Grace,

Fulness of the Stature of Christ, Eph. 4. 13. And let us express more and more of the Comfort of Grace and Joy of the Holy Ghost, which is pour'd forth now more abundantly than before. The Fountain being now open, we may come and take freely: tho we are poor, and in want, of our selves, we have a rich Friend in Heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ; and he will open the rich Treasure of his Goodness to us, if we go unto him.

All the Deliverances and Salvation which the Lord communicates to his People, are in and thro Christ, by virtue of, and according to his Covenant of Grace. Zech. 9. 11. *By the Blood of thy Covenant, I have sent forth thy Prisoners out of the Pit:* and he doth not say by Blood only, but by the Blood of the Covenant; for the Blood of Christ goes with the Covenant between God and us. Hence we read, 2 Sam. 23. 5. when David look'd at the Covenant which God had made with him, he makes that the Ground and Foundation of all the Mercy and Deliverances which he obtain'd. *Herein* (says he) *is all my Salvation, that God hath made with me a sure Covenant.*

By this Covenant all Spiritual Salvation is communicated: Psal. 111. 9. *Micah 7. 17, 18. Luke 1. 74.* The Lord Jesus Christ came to perform the Work of our Redemption, that the Lord might shew himself mindful of his Covenant; as it was not without a Covenant that God promised Life to Adam (tho not the same that we must look for Life by) so it is now with us. It is by virtue of the Covenant that we must expect Life and Salvation from God's hand: the beginning of our Salvation (which is begun in the first Grace given to us in our Conversion, and turning unto God) is given unto us according to the Covenant begun with us in Christ; and the end of our Salvation is according to the Covenant which he makes with our selves, in our own Persons, in and thro Christ.

Now the Grounds and Reasons why the Lord takes this Course to convey Life and Blessedness to us by Covenant (besides what has been already mention'd) may be such as these: He doth herein wonderfully glorify himself in the Manifestation of his Faithfulness and Truth, in keeping Covenant with his People; this being a part of his

Name,

Name, whereby he is made known to us, and which he will be glorify'd by; *Rev. 19. 11.* as well as by his Mercy and Goodness: *Rom. 15. 8, 9.*

2. The Lord hath chosen this way to bind his People faster to himself, and that he might keep them in more faithful Dependence upon him, and constant walking with him. A Covenant binds on both Parts: the Lord doth not bind himself to us, and leave us free; the Confederacy is mutual: the Lord is pleas'd to tie himself to us, and we are bound also and ty'd to him. Hence the Lord saith, *Jer. 13. 11. I have ty'd the whole House of Israel to me;* that is, in the Bond of the Covenant: *Ezek. 20. 37.* The Lord sees how slippery and unstable our Hearts are, how apt we are to start aside from our Duty towards him; as *Jer. 14. 10. We love to wander,* like Sheep that straggle from the Fold: And therefore to prevent this Inconstancy and Unsettledness, and to keep our Hearts more stable in our obedient walking before him, he binds us in the Bond of the Covenant. Hence the Lord says to *Abraham, Gen. 17. 7. I will stablish my Covenant with thee:* and then adds, *ver. 9. Thou shalt therefore keep my Covenant.* *Abraham* must keep Covenant with God; and so all Believers, that are the Children of *Abraham*, must labour to do, as they look for Covenant-Blessings from him.

3. The Lord doth this for the stronger Consolation of his People, that in all their Distresses and Difficulties they might ever have Recourse to the Faithfulness of that Covenant, which the Lord hath made with them: he is a God that cannot lye, nor alter the things which have gone out of his Lips; and therefore we have the stronger Consolation, *Heb. 6. 17, 18.* his Promises being Yea and Amen, which cannot fail; *2 Cor. 1. 20.* This was *David's* Stay, *2 Chron. 17. ult.* Tho Friends be unfaithful, and may deceive; nay, tho our own Hearts are so, and may deceive us, that we may not trust them, yet the Lord is faithful, and cannot fail his People; *2 Sam. 22. 3.* and *Psal. 18. 46. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my Salvation be exalted.* This is the Foundation of their Comfort, a Rock for them to stand upon, when the Storms blow, and the Waters beat, and they find themselves destitute of all other Comfort and Help.

4. The Lord hereby puts an Honour upon his People, whom he enters into Covenant with; he puts a kind of Royalty and Dignity upon them, when it shall be seen they are a People in Covenant with the most High God. In Jer. 13. 11. the Lord says, *I have ty'd them to me, that they might be my People; and that they might have a Name, and a Praise, and a Glory:* and in Deut. 26. 18, 19. it is said, *The Lord hath avouch'd thee to be his People, to make thee high above all People:* and in Zech. 11. The first Staff, which is interpreted to be the Covenant betwixt God and his People (as is plainly express'd ver. 10.) is call'd by the Name of *Beauty*, because this is the Beauty and Glory of any People, to be in Covenant with God. These are the Ends, or some of them, why God enters into Covenant with his People; and by virtue of it, passeth over all the Salvation which he intends to bestow upon them.

CH A P. V.

*Of the Foundation of the Covenant of Grace,
viz. the Covenant of Redemption.*

AS the Covenant of Grace hath its Rise from God only, and from his Grace; so 'tis founded and bottom'd upon nothing in us, but upon God's Covenant in Christ, whom he gave for a Covenant of the People, Isa. 49. 8. whom he laid in Zion for a Foundation, a sure Foundation, Isa. 28. 16. This Covenant of Reconciliation made with us, whereby we are actually recover'd and reconcil'd to God, did spring from, and is bottom'd upon the Covenant of Redemption or Suretyship; whereby the Recovery, Redemption, and Restoration of fallen Man was transacted between God and Christ. And as this Covenant, the Covenant of God with Christ the Mediator, and with the Church in him, are of the greatest Weight and highest Concern to all; so the Knowledge thereof, and of the Truth therein, is the very Center wherein all the Lines, concerning the Grace of God and our own Duty, do meet; wherein the whole

of Religion doth consist. And hence to the Understanding, Notions, and Conceptions that we have of these Covenants of God; and according as the Doctrine of them is stated in our Minds, our Conceptions of all other sacred Truths or Doctrines are conform'd: and as they who have right Apprehensions and a true Understanding of these things, are least likely to mistake the Truth in any other point of weight in the whole Compass of Religion; so those who unhappily fall under Misapprehensions about them, do generally either fluctuate in their own Minds about all other Evangelical Truths, or else do corrupt and pervert the whole Doctrine concerning them; and hereon also depends the Regulation of all our intire Christian Practice or Obedience. I shall therefore here speak a little of the Covenant of Redemption, to make way for the better understanding of all that hath been wrote or shall be farther treated of concerning the Covenant of Grace; and particularly what relates to Christ, the Mediator of the Covenant.

1. That there is a Covenant past between the Father and Son concerning our Salvation, there is such pregnant Proof of it in the Scripture, and Evidence of it, that none can deny. The whole Business of our Salvation was first and from Eternity transacted between the Father and Christ, before it was in time reveal'd to us. Hence we are said to be given unto Christ, *John 17. 6,* 10. as if the Father should say to the Son, "These I take to be Vessels of Mercy, and these thou shalt bring unto me; for they will destroy themselves, but thou shalt save them out of their lost Estate." And then the Son taketh them at his Father's Hand, and looking at his Father's Will, *John 6. 37, 38.* he undertakes for them, that none be lost of them which his Father hath given him; *John 17. 2, 6, 8, 11, 12, 20, 24.*

A Proof hereof may be taken from *Isa. 59. 20, 21.* And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from Transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord, &c. Where we read of a Covenant between the Lord and the Redeemer, that was to come unto Zion, which can be no other than the Covenant of Redemption: 'tis Christ only, whose Seed have the Spirit and Word insur'd to them for ever, *Gal 3. 29.* and the Church's Seed have

this Promise and Covenant only so far as they are Christ's Seed, *Isa. 44. 3. who receiv'd not the Spirit by measure.* A farther Proof hereof may be taken from *Psal. 89.* where the Covenant made with Christ is held forth as the Foundation, Original, and Establishment of the Covenant made with his Seed; and Christ is spoke of under the Name of *David*, who was a Type of Christ in many things, but eminently in the Covenant that God made with him, as a publick Person and a King by Covenant: *I have made a Covenant with my Chosen.* God having chose Christ for performing the Work of Redemption, did make a Covenant with him; and that the Person spoken of under the Name of *David*, and with whom the Covenant was made, is Christ and no other, is evident from several Expressions there, which are peculiar to Christ's Person and Kingdom, and cannot be apply'd to *David* farther than as he was a Type of Christ. This *David* is the Mighty One upon whom God laid the Help of his People, *ver. 19.* and it is he upon whom the Enemy shall not exact, *ver. 22.* who is higher than the Kings of the Earth, *ver. 27.* whose Seed endureth for ever, and his Throne as the Days of Heaven, and to all Generations, *ver. 4, 29, 36, 37.* 'tis he who is distinguish'd from his Seed by this difference, that they may sin and be chastis'd, *ver. 30.* It's not said of himself, but only of his Seed; and by the Force and Virtue of this Covenant, his sinful Seed are not cast off from Covenant-Kindness; and this could be no other but Christ. And that which makes it most clear, the Covenant and Promises made here, *ver. 27.* and in the Parallel Scripture, *2 Sam. 7. 14.* are apply'd to Christ, *Heb. 1. 5.* And that this was the Covenant of Redemption, which God says he made with his chosen *David*, *i. e.* Christ, may be gather'd also from the same Scripture: it is the Covenant by which Christ is constituted a King and a Priest, for the Work of our Redemption: *Psal. 89. 19, 20. I have exalted one chosen out of the People, with my Holy Oil have I anointed him.* And 'tis the Covenant by which Christ receiv'd Commands to fulfil his Offices, and to depend upon God in the doing of the Work, *ver. 27.* and had peculiar Promises made of Assistance in it, *ver. 21.* and of glorious Victory and Exaltation, *ver. 23. & 27.* and of a Seed and Offspring to endure

endure for ever. And this could be no other than the Covenant of Redemption; for in no other Covenant is Christ engag'd in this Service, call'd unto this Office, Undertaker of the People's Help, Receiver of such Commands and Promises, &c. but by this Covenant.

We are not to conceive of this Covenant of Redemption in such an abstracted Consideration, as if the things transacted in the Covenant made with Christ, had no Relation or Connection with the Covenant made with us. But on the contrary, we are to consider them, as having a great Affinity one with the other; and tho' these both agree in many things, yet differing in others, must be still distinguish'd, and are neither to be confounded nor divided; they both are the Result of infinite Grace, and indispensibly necessary in order to our Salvation. This and several other Scriptures hold forth all the Essentials and Requisites for making up a formal Covenant to be betwixt God and Christ: and this Covenant is express'd in Scripture,

1. On the Father's part: And here there is a Designation and Appointment of Christ the Son to the Office of Mediatorship, to be a means of bringing us back to God, and into a Covenant with him. Hence Christ is said to be seal'd of the Father, *John 6. 27.* a marked one for such a purpose, *1 Pet. 1. 18.* He was ordain'd in the Counsel of the Father, before the Foundation of the World. Hence he is also said to be chosen of the Father, *Isa. 42. 1.* noting his Designation for this Work.

2. There is a Commandment from the Father to the Son, which he must, and willingly doth submit unto and obey, thereby to effect the Salvation of his People: He had a Commandment what to teach and instruct them in, as the Prophet of the Church, to enlighten the Elect with the Knowledge of the Truth: *Isa. 42. 6, 7. To be a Light to the Gentiles, to open their Eyes.* And a Commandment also he had to lay down his Life for those that are given unto him, *John 10. 18.* and to be tender over the Lambs, carrying them in his Bosom, *Isa. 40. 11.*

3. There is a Promise from the Father to the Son: The Father covenants with him, to give him the Spirit in an abundant measure, *Isa. 42. 1.* and of Assistance and Help in this great Work of our Redemption, *Isa. 42. 6. I will hold thy Hand.* He promises him a blessed Success,

70 Of the Foundation of the Covenant, &c.

that he shall not labour in vain, *Isa. 53. 10.* that he shall see his Seed, many believing on his Name. *Isa. 55. 5.* that Nations that know him not, shall run unto him; a Promise of Rule and Dominion over those that are saved by him. *Isa. 40. 10. & 42. 4.* he shall set Judgment in the Earth, and the Isles shall wait for his Law, to submit themselves to it: and all Judgment is accordingly committed to the Son, and he has a Promise of Glory to follow, such as should make the Nations run to him; and a Promise of Glory unto them, which Christ knew to be his Father's Will from the Beginning, by the Covenant pass'd between them: and he brings forth that Secret concerning the Glory promis'd to them, out of the Bosom of his Father, and reveals it to his Disciples. *It* (says he) *my Father's Pleasure is to give you a Kingdom.*

(1.) Then there is an Acceptation of the Office to which he was design'd by the Father. He took not this Office of Mediatorship upon himself, but first the Father calls him to it, and then the Son accepts it, and saith, *Lo! I come to do thy Will: Heb. 5. 4, 5. Psal. 40. 7, 8. Heb. 10. 7.*

(2.) There is a Promise on Christ's part, to depend and trust upon the Father for Help. *Heb. 2. 13. I will trust in him. Isa. 50. 7, 9.* His Dependence is on the Father for Help: *The Lord will help me; tho I have many against me (Men and Devils) yet the Lord will help me: And Isa. 49. 5. My God shall be my Strength.*

(3.) There is a Promise of Submission to his Father's Will, in bearing Reproaches and the Injuries that should be done unto him; and to lay down his Life for those that were given to him by the Father: *Isa. 50. 5, 6. John 10. 17, 18.* all which he was careful to discharge: *John 17. 4, 6. & John 12. 49, 50.*

(4.) According to all this Covenant, Christ expects the Glory which was promis'd to himself and his Members, *John 17. 5. & 2er. 24.* that it should be accomplish'd from the Father. And to close this Head, The Subject-Matter and Articles of this Covenant of Redemption and Suretyship, agreed upon and concluded between *Jehovah* and Christ by that eternal Compact (which may be divided into Commands, Conditions, and Promises of that Covenant) may be comprehended under these following Heads; viz. 1. Who should be re- deem'd,

deem'd. 2. Who the Redeemer should be. 3. What his Work. 4. When to be done. 5. How to be apply'd. 6. What his Reward. 7. What Assurance given between the Parties for mutual Performance of this Covenant. All which being concluded in the eternal Purpose of God's Will, and in his eternal Agreement with Christ; and falling under his actual Consent, makes up a closed Covenant between them.

C H A P. VI.

Of CHRIST the Mediator of the Covenant of Grace.

THAT that there is a Mediator of the Covenant of Grace, and but one only, even the Lord Jesus Christ, doth clearly appear from the whole Current of the Scripture: 1 *Tim.* 2. 5, 6. *Heb.* 8. 6. & 9. 15. The first Covenant, which was a Covenant of Works, had no Mediator; for then there was no Disagreement between God and Man: but this Covenant, under which we stand by Grace, hath a Mediator, and needeth one; the Lord having purposed not to suffer Sin to pass unpunish'd, nor yet to destroy all Mankind in punishing Sin, and satisfying the Demands of infinite Justice on account of it, but to glorify himself in such Manifestation of his Grace as should have Satisfaction to his Justice carry'd along with it. In which respect it was necessary that a Mediator should be found, who might do the Work in this manner, in whose hand this Covenant of Grace might be establish'd; and that God might be dealt with like himself, throughout the whole Business of our Salvation.

1. It became the Majesty of the Lord to keep at a distance with sinful Creatures, and not be dealt with immediately by the Parties who had done him the wrong; but only by his own Son, by whom he appointed we should draw near to him thro his Mediation and Intercession: *Mal.* 1. 14. *Heb.* 7. 25. *John* 1. 18.

2. It was for the Glory of his Wisdom in finding out such a way to bring about that blessed Union between God and the fallen Creature, in reconciling infinite Justice and Mercy, and making them both meet together; in punishing Sin, and yet setting the Sinner free: *Eph. 3. 10, 11.*

3. It was for the Glory of his Goodness and free Grace, that Man's whole Salvation should be carry'd on and accomplish'd in such a way of Intreaty and Intercession in the Hands of a Mediator, who was sure to prevail with God on our behalf; *Heb. 5. 17.* and yet without Impeachment to the Glory of his Justice, which must be dealt with in a way of Satisfaction, and by one who was able to pay down a sufficient Price for our Ransom: *1 Tim. 2. 6. Rom. 3. 24, 25, 26.* The highest Justice and the freest Grace met together in such a Mediator in Man's Salvation; in paying a Price as fully as if there had been no Grace or Favour shew'd to him, and yet as much Intreaty and Request is made to Grace, as if Justice had receiv'd no Satisfaction.

Farther, in respect of Christ himself, the Covenant is establish'd in the Hand of a Mediator, that he might himself be glorify'd in this Undertaking, whose Honour and Glory God had in his eye as well as his own; *John 5. 23. & 16. 14.* It is as Mediator that he is constituted a King, a Priest, and a Prophet to his People, *Heb. 1. & Chap. 7.* throughout; & *5. 4.* and also in respect of that exceeding great Power that was to be put into his hand as Mediator; no less than the Administration of the whole Affairs of Heaven and Earth being committed to him, *Phil. 2. 10.* That the Government should be upon his Shoulders, *Isa. 9. 6. Mat. 28. 18. Rev. 3. 7.* and likewise in respect of his sole and absolute working of the whole Business of our Salvation from the Beginning to the End, every part of it being immediately from him, as the Fountain, and Storehouse, and Treasurer of all the Blessings of the Covenant; *Heb. 12. 2. Eph. 1. 3. Acts 2. 33.*

And then in respect of the Creatures Good and Happiness, this Covenant was establish'd in the hand of a Mediator, without which we should have had no saving Knowledge of God, which was typify'd, *Exod. 20. 19.* but in the Mediator we are brought to see him, and to the

the saving Knowledge of him; *John 17. 3.* The distance was so great, that without Christ there could have been no Union between God and the fallen Creature, but he must have remain'd at an everlasting distance from God, and have lost the Fruition and Enjoyment of him for ever: *Eph. 2. 12, 13.* Nor could fallen Man ever have had any conformity to him, whose Image was thus lost by his Apostacy from him: *2 Cor. 3. 18.* In a word, without a Mediator, no part of Man's temporal, spiritual, or eternal Good should have been brought to pass; inasmuch as all the Good which God had from Eternity design'd to do for Man, was determin'd to be in and thro a Mediator. Hence we are said to be *chosen and ordain'd unto Adoption, Holiness, Obedience, Perseverance, &c. in and thro him:* *Eph. 1. 3, 4, 5.* *1 Pet. 1. 2.*

But now by the Lord's Establishment of this Covenant in the hands of a Mediator, Man's Good is greatly advanc'd: there is a Foundation laid of a higher Happiness to be recover'd in Christ, than was lost in *Adam*. And this is not only a better Covenant in that respect, but also through him there is a Foundation laid of a better Security of that Happiness, a surer Covenant, and standing in it, than was before; and which cannot now be disannull'd, as the other was: *Gal. 3. 15, 17, 19.* *Jen. 31. 33. & 20. 21.* *Psal. 89. 33, 34, 35.* And farther, there is solid ground of Confidence and Consolation laid herein, answerable to the Security granted; the Sum whereof is, That all shall go well, notwithstanding all things in us that speak the contrary, because there is a Mediator in it, in whose hands it was ordain'd, and thro whom it is establish'd with us. And indeed without such a one it had been as weak and ineffectual to give Righteousness and Life, as the first Covenant prov'd to be to us.

The Name *Mediator*, *medius*, signifies properly one betwixt two, a middle Person, *Gal. 3. 20.* and in *Hebrew* [*a Reconciler*] *Job 9. 33.* One who interposeth for taking away Differences betwixt disagreeing Parties, and carries the Mind of each to the other, and undertakes for both Parties in order to it. In which sense *Moses* was a typical Mediator between God and the Children of *Israel*, *Gal. 3. 19, 20.* with *Exod. 19. 3. & 20. 19. Deut. 5. 5.* And thus Christ is the Mediator of the New Cove-

Covenant, he is the middle Person between God and Man, and having taken our Nature upon him, is equally near to both; *Mat. 1. 23.* And hath, according to the Covenant with his Father, interpos'd and actually compos'd the Difference; *Eph. 2. 14, 16. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Col. 1. 20.* He is our [*Goel*] our Kinsman, who had the Right of Redemption, *Job 19. 25.* thro whom the whole Covenant of Peace, was from the beginning to the end of it transacted (as we heard before) thro whom God dealt with us, and we with him. It was thro him this Covenant with fallen Man was first motion'd, and by him was entertain'd on our behalf, and this Proposal of free Redemption of Sinners was concluded. *Psal. 89. 3. & 40. 7.* Then said I, *Lo! I come.* We were represented in him as the Head of his Church, he undertaking on our behalf, *Heb. 2. 13.* Thro him the Stipulation on our part was made, and in our room, with the Father: he put his Name in our Bond, and became a Surety for us; and it is thro him the whole Covenant is fulfill'd, and every word of it hath a being, both all that is promis'd on God's part, *2 Cor. 1. 20.* and on the part of fallen Sinners. He reconcil'd God to Sinners by his Death, and us to God by the Operation of his Spirit; and he works in and for his People all that is requir'd of them, *Phil. 1. 21. Heb. 12. 2.* It was thro him the blessed Tidings of the second Covenant was proclaim'd and publish'd, *Isa. 61. 1.* And the Mystery of it is reveal'd, and made manifest in the Hearts of Believers; *2 Cor. 4. 6. John 1. 18. & Chap. 17. 6.* By him a Price was paid to the full on our behalf, the Price of his own Blood, which was of an infinite value, for which he stood engag'd to the Justice of God, till the Debt was paid by his Obedience and Death. Thro his Mediation the Difference being made up, God and Man are brought together again in him, as a middle Person, and fit Resting-place for us; *Eph. 2. 13, 14. Heb. 2. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 19.* And thro him it is, that all the Blessings of the Covenant are apply'd to us, and the Fruit of his Purchase is drawn forth by his Intercession; as a Priest for ever before God on our behalf, for fresh Applications of all his purchas'd Blessings. He receiv'd them for us, and he is the great Treasurer and Dispenser of them as Head of his Church, and according to the Necessities of every Member there-
of;

of, *Eph.* 1. 3. *Psal.* 68. 18. He is the Person on whom all the Acts of God's Love are first put forth, *John* 1. 14, 16. and thro whom the Covenant is confirm'd with us. He seal'd the New Testament with his Blood, and interpos'd to make it God's irrevocable Will of Grace to usward for ever: *Gal.* 3. 15, 17. *Heb.* 6. 17, 18. Thro him it is, that Believers are brought into it; he travails with us to get our Consent, and engages our Hearts to a Closure with it; *2 Cor.* 5. 19. *Ezek.* 20. 37. *Rev.* 22. 17. and is therefore call'd *the Apostle and High-Priest of our Profession*, or Adstipulation. And in and thro him it is, that this Covenant is now made sure, and stands firm and stable with all those who are once really engag'd in it; and cannot fail as the first Covenant did, but is become an everlasting Covenant: *Psal.* 89. 34, 35. *John* 17. 12. *Isa.* 55. 3. This blessed Mediator is now the great Conservator of the Peace between God and us, and it is he that makes the Covenant so sure to us; *1 John* 2. 1, 2. From all which, we may see the Misery of all natural Men, while under the first Covenant of Works; and the blessed State of Believers, who are brought into this new and better Covenant. We have a Mediator to deal for us, by whom we may approach with an humble Boldness to the Father with our Services, and for obtaining all Covenant-Blessings from him; to interpose between us sinful Creatures and his Anger, at any time; to speak for us, when we either cannot or dare not speak for our selves; and to procure those Blessings for us, at such times as we are most sensible that we deserve none: *1 John* 2. 2. *Eph.* 2. 18. & 3. 12.

Let this blessed Mediator therefore be thankfully approach'd, apply'd to, and fully employ'd in all things that appertain to the Covenant of Grace, and in all things pertaining to God, *Heb.* 2. 17. as the great Mediator of it. And let him be acknowledg'd and honour'd as such; and study to carry it also as becomes those who need such a Mediator. Take care to beat down Self-Confidence and Self-Adoration, even of every thing in you that is not Christ, (those Gifts, and Graces, and Assistances that we receive from him, not excepted.) Put not a created Grace in Christ's room, be not lifted up with these, nor be led away from the great Mediator

tor by them: *Phil.* 3. 3, 4. Whatever good and comfortable Frame we may at any time be in, let us watch our Hearts, that we lay not the weight of our Acceptation upon these things, but keep them especially within sight of Christ's Mediation, as the sole ground of our Confidence: *Phil.* 3. 7. And let our Respects and Application to him be as large as the Extent of his Mediation reacheth to.

Let us also beware and be very tender of tempting him and grieving him, by sinning against him: *1 Cor.* 10. 9. He is compleatly qualify'd for this Office, being *the express Image of his Father's Person, and the Brightness of his Father's Glory*, *Heb.* 1. 3. Let us therefore be careful to avoid whatever would be offensive or provoking to him. The Excellencies of the Father do all shine forth in the Son. Those Divine Attributes that were never before manifested, Mercy and Long-suffering, are reveal'd in him; and those that were before manifested, shine more brightly thro him: His Wisdom, Goodness, his Power and Sovereignty, his Justice, Holiness, and All-sufficiency, his Patience, Long-suffering, and Faithfulness, and his excellent Majesty, are made more bright, and have a new Lustre in this blessed Mediator. Let us therefore admire, and wonder, and adore the unsearchable Riches of the Grace and Wisdom of God, in so early providing such a Mediator for us, in calling his only Son to this Office for our sakes, and his voluntary Submission to it: his Undertaking, we may be assur'd, shall prosper. And besides all other Supports of our Faith, from his Union of Nature with us, and Union; from his Propriety in us, and Consanguinity with us, and his gracious Qualifications for this Work: he is our Mediator by Calling and Office, and can no more decline any thing that would be for the good of Believers, than he can be unanswerable to his Father's Calling, or unfaithful in his Office; which is impossible. Particularly,

He was separated and appointed of the Father unto those excellent Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King of his Church; all which being absolutely needful for us, he performs on our behalf, both in his Estate of Humiliation here on Earth, and of Exaltation in Heaven. The necessity of his undertaking them for us, appeareth from

from the Evils under which we were lying in our fallen Estate. Particularly,

- (1.) Ignorance of God, *Gal. 4. 8.*
- (2.) Alienation from him, *Eph. 4. 18.*
- (3.) Impotency to come to him, *John 6. 44.* And these Offices which he hath undertaken for his People, are suited to all these.

His Prophecy and Teaching meets with our Ignorance and Blindness, for he is a *Teacher come from God*, *John 3. 7.* and by him all his People are taught of God, *Jer. 31. 33. Isa. 54. 13.*

His Priesthood and Sacrifice meets with our Alienation and Estrangement from God, and our Enmity against him, which is the fruit of our Ignorance of him; for thereby the Distance is remov'd, and a Reconciliation procur'd: *Eph. 2. 13, 14, 18.*

And his Kingdom meets with our Impotency and Rebellion against God, which he sweetly overcomes. And thereby it is we are mightily wrought upon, and determin'd by his efficacious Grace, that our Weakness proves no overpowering Impediment in the way of it: *Psal. 45. 5. Jer. 31. 33.*

He came to reveal a new way of Happiness, it was therefore needful that he be a *Prophet*, *Acts 7. 37.* He came to purchase and acquire this Blessedness for us, and therefore it was necessary that he should be a *Priest*, to procure the same by a Sacrifice for us, *Heb. 9. 15.* And he came to make application of his Purchase, and therefore it was needful he should be a *King*, to rule and reign in and over us. The Necessity and Use of his Prophetical Office we find in some measure discover'd in the Promises of the Covenant. He being acquainted with his Father's Secrets and Mind, he publisheth and declareth the same to his People; especially his gracious Purpose concerning the way and means of his Reconciliation to them: *Mat. 11. 27.* He works the effectual Knowledge of God in his Peoples Hearts; *2 Cor. 4. 6. Luke 1. 77, 79.* And he removes the Mistakes and Prejudices in our Minds, whereby the Alienation between God and Man is heighten'd and continu'd, *Eph. 4. 21.* Hence he is call'd by way of eminency the *Prophet*, *John 6. 14.* and the *Angel* or Messenger of the Covenant, *Mal. 3. 1.* the *Word*, *John 1. 14.* and a *Witness*, *Isa. 55. 4.*

By

By his Priesthood he performs the great Work of Satisfaction for Sin, by offering up himself a Sacrifice to Death, after he had given perfect Obedience to the Law, *Heb. 9. 26.* This he did as our Surety, he stood in the room and place of his People, and Justice did strike him in our stead; *Isa. 53. 5.* The Justice of God requir'd Satisfaction for our Sins, and Christ as our Surety answer'd it fully for us.

To this Office also belongeth his Intercession, which is perform'd in the virtue of that Satisfaction he hath given to Divine Justice, and the Sacrifice which was once offer'd up by him, of an infinite value, for Sin: *Isa. 53. 12. Heb. 9. 24.* And this was according to the High Priest's Office, which was, (1.) The offering of Sacrifices: and, (2.) The presenting of it in the Holy of Holies, with Prayer and Intercession that God would accept it for the Sins of his People. The Excellency of his Priesthood, as our Mediator, was typify'd by *Aaron's* Priesthood in both the parts of it; and more eminently and excellently in *Melchisedeck's* Priesthood, which shew'd also the Continuance of it for ever. Thus our blessed Mediator did and doth both parts of this Office on Earth and in Heaven; but with this difference, on Earth he eminently sacrific'd and offer'd up himself, *Heb. 9. 14.* in Heaven he eminently intercedes for his People, *Heb. 7. 24, 25.* And by presenting that Sacrifice, and offering of himself, which was made on Earth, and continuing the Exercise of it by his Intercession in Heaven; he becomes the applying Cause of Salvation to us: *Heb. 5. 10, 11. Rom. 5. 10.*

Lastly, Being appointed King of his Church, as Mediator, in subordination to his Father, *Psal. 2. 6.* (it being distinguish'd here from that Kingdom which he hath as God co-essential with the Father) the Authority and Power which he is invest'd with, is very large, yea, universal: for it is *All Power in Heaven and in Earth*, *Mat. 28. 18.* and reaches so high, as that he is said to uphold all things by the Word of his Power, *Heb. 1. 3.* His Power extends over all Creatures, and over all Ages and Generations of Men: *Eph. 1. 22. Dan. 7. 4. Rev. 17. 14.* Over the Wicked and Reprobate as well as the Elect; *Dan. 7. 14.* Yet he is a King more peculiarly to and over his Church and People; *Psal. 2. 6, 8, 9.* And that both

both outwardly, by appointing Laws, Ordinances, and Officers over them; and inwardly, by ruling in their Hearts: *Luke 17. 21.* His Kingdom, as Mediator, is over all his Creatures, for the sake of his Church; wherein he doth all things with Authority and Power, ruling them by his Word and Spirit; not by outward Force, but by his powerful Influence upon the Spirits of Men, and determining them in a secret way, either providentially, or by the saving sanctifying Influences of his Spirit, as he pleaseth: *Zech. 4. 6.* The great Work of his Kingly Power being to employ that for the Salvation of his People, the subduing his and their Enemies, and to bring to pass his Purposes of both, either without or against all contradiction; *Psal. 2.* throughout: and to make his other Offices subservient and effectual thereunto. By his Prophecy he teaches his Church and People, whom his Priesthood and Sacrifice hath purchas'd; and as a King he sits and conveys the Power of it into their Souls: *Zech. 6. 13. 2 Cor. 10. 4. 5.*

And thus we may observe the sweet Concurrence of all these Offices in Christ our great Mediator, all leveling at that great End, the Reconciliation and Salvation of Sinners; *2 Cor. 5. 19.* but yet in such divers ways, that we must not appropriate to any of them solely the effecting of this great Work, but by all of them jointly. Our Salvation is render'd the more compleat and sure in his joint Exercise of all these Offices: he saves his People *in various, to the utmost, over and above, all manner of ways, perfectly*; *Heb. 7. 25.* Having inform'd our Judgments, remov'd Mistakes therein, and made us willing to be reconcil'd unto him by the powerful Operation of his Holy Spirit; he procures this so great Salvation for us by our own Consent, bringing us willingly into the Bond of the Covenant: those proudest and highest Enemies that he hath in our Natures against himself, being thus subdu'd and overpower'd by his determining Grace. And having shew'd us where a Sacrifice of such an infinite value is to be had, and how to apply it to our own Souls; both at first for our Justification, and also daily and continually afterward for repeated Pardon and Forgiveness, and to improve it as our daily Sacrifice, whilst he is carrying on the great Work of Sanctification in us: he enables his People to live intirely by Faith and Depen-

Dependence upon him, and to be guided continually by him, as the great and gracious Ruler and Governour of them. And how precious and desirable must this *Mediator* be, who is so excellent in himself, and who is anointed unto all these high Offices over the House of God, *Heb. 10. 21.* and of whose Fidelity in them we are so fully assur'd!

CHAP. VII.

The great Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant of Grace.

THE exceeding great Blessings and Benefits contain'd in the *Covenant of Grace*, are next to be consider'd; that all those that are in Covenant with God, may know the *great things which are given to them of God*, *1 Cor. 2. 12.* all the Blessings which God imparts to his People, being convey'd to them by this Covenant. And this is necessary to be known, that we may take comfort in them, rejoice in them, and see our own Happiness, the Blessedness of all those that are in Covenant with God. As God bids *Abraham* view the Length and Breadth of the Land which he would give unto him; so we should view the Length and Breadth of the Promises, all the several Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, and rejoice in our Portion, which is so unspeakably great.

And this should be a means of alluring and drawing us to come and take hold of the Covenant, that they may be ours; and also to make the Bonds of the Covenant more light and easy to those that, thro infinite Grace, are already in it: to support our Faith in all Trials, Exigencies, and Straits whatsoever, that we may fall into, and to lead us to the right Fountain from whence all our Blessings flow; the Lord dealing in all his ways towards his People, according to his Covenant with them. We may see therein the Faithfulness of God, who keeps Covenant and Promise with his People. This Covenant is a rich Store-house fill'd with all manner of Blessings, which can never be empty'd, nor come

to an end: It's a Well of Salvation, a Fountain of Grace and all good things to satisfy every thirsty Soul, and which our finite narrow Understandings can never fully apprehend, the infinite Grace that is contain'd therein.

Now these Blessings of the Covenant are all infolded and wrap'd up in the Promises of it; the full discovery whereof shall be, when the Heavens come to be folded up. We have now by Faith an Interest in them, which is safe and sure, being in the safest hand, who is the Surety of this Covenant: Tho as yet we have them by Promise only, and not the full Possession of them; but then we shall fully see how extensive the Blessings of this Covenant are, to our abundant and everlasting Comfort and Satisfaction.

The Promises and Blessings of the Covenant are of two sorts: 1. Of things spiritual and eternal. 2. Of things temporal, and that concern this outward Life. The spiritual Blessings of the Covenant are chiefly comprehended in these places of Scripture; Jer. 31. 32, 33. *This shall be my Covenant, saith the Lord, after those days; I will put my Law in their Hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my People; and they shall teach no more every Man his Neighbour, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them: for I will forgive their Iniquity, and remember their Sin no more.* And in Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27, 28. *Then will I sprinkle clean Water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your Filthiness, and from all your Idols will I cleanse you: A new Heart also will I give you, and a new Spirit will I put within you, and will take away the Stony Heart, &c.* So Jer. 32. 38, 39, 40. *They shall be my People, and I will be their God, and I will give them one Heart, and one Way, that they may fear me for ever, &c.* And Gen. 17. 7. *I will be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* And in Heb. 8. 10. the foregoing Promises are recited by the Apostle. And these places compar'd together, with such other, do express the Sum of those great things promis'd in the Covenant. And here is indeed all that Heaven and Earth can afford; all that can be needed or desir'd; and this by a firm and irrevocable Grant, made over and made sure to all that will sincerely embrace it.

82 GOD the Father in the Covenant.

Particularly, God hath in his Covenant granted and made over to his People,

1. Himself.
2. His Son.
3. His Spirit.
4. The free Pardon and Remission of all their Sins, and the Justification of their Persons.
5. Sanctification, with all spiritual Blessings appertaining to it.
6. The Earth and all temporal Blessings, so far as they are truly good for them.
7. The Angels of Light to minister to them.
8. Victory over all the Powers of Darkness.
9. Victory over Death.
10. The Kingdom of Glory.

C H A P. VIII.

GOD the Father in the Covenant.

I THE Lord God hath made over himself in this Covenant; that's the great and comprehensive Promise, *I will be thy God*, Gen. 27. 7. & Jer. 32. 33. This is set in the midst of the Promises, as the Heart in the midst of the Body, to communicate Life to all the rest of the Members. This Promise has influence into all the rest: it is incomprehensibly great, he being an infinite God; yet in this Promise he shuts up himself, *I will be their God*: i. e. "What I am, 'tis all theirs; my self, my glorious and incomprehensible Essence, all my glorious Attributes, my Omnipotence, my Omnipotence, my Wisdom, my Righteousness, my Holiness, my All-sufficiency, my Faithfulness, Goodness, &c." The Lord will make over these for the Good of his People that are in Covenant with him. I will make over my self to them, to be henceforth and for ever theirs.

1. Their reconcil'd God and Father. As if the Lord should say, "I was angry, but my Anger is turn'd away, I am reconcil'd, the Quarrel is now compos'd, my Wrath is appeas'd, I have found a Ransom, I will forgive their Iniquity, and will remember their Sin

"no more: I will take away their Iniquity, and receive them graciously; I will heal their Backslidings; I will love them freely, for my Anger is turn'd away from them." *Jer. 31. 34. : Hos. 14. 4.* There is nothing to be fear'd, nothing dreadful but an angry provok'd God; his Wrath contains all the Miseries of this Earth that can possibly be undergone, with all the Horrour, Anguish, and amazing Torments, which are ready to meet thee, and to feed upon thee in the Lake beneath. This is the Wrath of God; but as soon as he is become thy God in Covenant with thee, in that hour Death and Hell vanish.

2. Their Portion. Man was never intended to be a Self-sufficient, he was created under a necessity of Dependence on something without himself, not only for the Continuation of his Being, but for the Comfort of it. The Soul of Man is too big for all the World, and having lost his God, he can find no Rest, nor true and lasting Satisfaction in any Creature; they all say, *It is not in me: and where shall it be found, or on what shall it subsist?* Why, God will be his People's Portion, and their Heritage for ever. As their Deliverance is from him, so their Dependence shall be on him: he is their Substance, and on him is their Subsistence. *Jer. 10. 6.* he writes himself the Portion of Jacob; and as such, his People accept him. *The Lord is the Portion of my Inheritance, Psal. 16. 5. & Lam. 3. 24. The Lord is my Portion, faith my Soul, therefore will I hope in him.* He gives Portions to his Enemies, but they have their Portion in this Life; *Psal. 17. 14. Whose Belly thou fillest,* &c. perhaps with Riches, Pleasures, or worldly Glory; and sends them away, as the Father of the Prodigal did. But whilst he does thus, he himself is the Portion of his People: he makes over himself to be their Inheritance; and while there is in him to supply them, they shall never want. When God said to Abraham, *I will be thy God,* it was more than if he had given him ten thousand Worlds; and yet thus he makes over himself to every true Believer. *All things are yours; 1 Cor. 3. 19.* and all are contain'd in this, *I will be thy God.* God in his Essence and glorious Attributes communicates himself to his People for their good continually. God personally consider'd, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; enters

84 GOD the Father in the Covenant

enters into Covenant with them to be theirs.

And as the Lord is their Portion, so he is a sufficient Portion. *With thee is the Fountain of Life*, Psal. 36. He is all things to them: He is sufficient to his own Blessedness, and therefore much more unto ours. He that hath all things below God, but not God, hath nothing; and he that hath nothing besides God, but hath God, hath all things; enough and to spare, filling up and running over: there's still more to be had in him, if more could be held.

For whatever Good is in the Creature, is more eminently and abundantly in God himself; he being the Fountain, and they but the Cisterns. Therefore if all the Good of all Creatures join'd together were sufficient to satisfy our Wants, as we should think they were; then God is much more. Farther, there is in God a Sutableness to the Desires of the Soul of Man, which all the Creatures put together cannot supply: being made after the Image of God, it can never be fully satisfy'd without him. The Soul is a Spirit, and desires spiritual things; and God being so, in whom all that is spiritually and truly good is treasur'd up, there is in him what will fully satisfy all the Desires of our Souls. There is enough in him to fill up all our Faculties:

1. Our Understandings. There are infinitely beautiful Perfections in him, which we may behold with unspeakable Delight; yet when the most searching Eye, the most greedy Thoughts have search'd and run their utmost, they come not near the end, but shall be ever admiring those Treasures of Light and Beauty, that are still beyond them. While the blind World deride and despise the Portion of the Saints, as shallow things that have no depth in them, they will be found by those that search into them, to be an Height, and Breadth, and Length, and Depth, that have no bottom in them: 1 Cor.

2. *The deep things of God.* The Extasies of those glorious Joys which the Saints enjoy in the other World, are the running over of their eyes upon their Hearts, and do break in upon them from their Vision of God.

2. There's enough also to fill up our Wills and Affections. There's infinite Goodness, incomprehensible Love, marvellous Loving-kindness, unspeakable Delights and Joys: Psal. 31. 19. *O how great is the Goodness which*

that hath laid up for those that fear thee! Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive, the things which God hath prepar'd for them that love him. Laid up in himself, that is the Fountain and Treasury of Love, Joy, and endless Satisfaction: Our Life is hid with Christ in God. O love the Lord, all ye his Saints, and bless his Name, and rejoice in him continually.

Again, There is enough to fill up all our time; there is admiring Work, and praising Work for ever; there is matter for Love and Joy to feed upon for ever; endless Praises, eternal Pleasures, everlasting Rejoicings: *Psal. 16 ult. Pleasures for evermore.* There is enough to reward all our Labours, and repay all our Expences: there is a full Reward, *Gen. 15. 1. Fear not, Abraham, I am thy Shield, and exceeding great Reward:* exceeding not only thy Work, but thy very Thoughts also; thou shalt not serve the Lord for nought; nay, thou little is too much for thy Earnings of him, yet this whole World is too little for his Bounty, and less than himself will not satisfy for his Love; the eternal God will be thy Reward. Would the Fatness of the Earth, and the Fulness of Heaven, if thou hadst both, be enough for thee? Would Corn, and Wine, and Houses, and Lands, and Pleasures here, and eternal Life hereafter suffice thee; God alone is as much, and infinitely more than all this: the Star-light cannot be wanting when thou hast the Sun, nor Streams when thou hast the Ocean: these can contribute nothing to it, which have their Rise from it; and cannot then the Almighty God, who has a Self-Sufficiency, be enough to satisfy so poor a Worm? Is he blessed in himself, and mayst not thou be blessed in him? He that thinks any thing less than God will suffice, understands not a Soul; and he that wants any thing more, understands not God. God alone is as much as God and all the World; and this is the Heritage of the Servants of the Lord, God is their Portion. If enough be not yet said, Look awhile and consider from whence thou art taken up into this Blessedness? What hast thou left? What an Exchange hast thou made? Who art taken with the Prodigal from the Trough, with the Beggar from the Dunghil, yea as a Brand out of the Fire, for there thy Lot was fallen.

86 God the Father in the Covenant.

Where hast thou left the unthinking and careless World? Blessing themselves in Vanity, pleasing themselves with Shadows, feeding on Ashes, rejoicing in a thing of naught, making a shift awhile to make merry with these, while they are hastening to the Pit, to that Lake of Fire and Brimstone, which is the Portion of their Cup.

Consider farther, what now, by infinite Grace, thou art deliver'd from, that Wrath and Curse issuing in eternal Death, which was once all thy Heritage; and compare with it, that Life, and Love, and Peace, and Joy, and endless Glory, which thou now possessest in that God that is thy Portion. What a poor Wretch thou wast, when thou hadst nothing but Sin, and Shame, and Misery, that thou couldst call thy own? And whatever good things thou hadst and liv'd upon, was none of thine, but to be accounted for and given up again upon demand. Remember how poor thou wert, when all thou hadst thou must be brought to a reckoning for, and knewest not how soon that Account must be given.

But now God is thy own, all that he is, all that he hath is thine; thou hast a God to go unto, who is an All-sufficient Portion, whatever thy Condition is. God is thy Portion, the Light of thine Eyes, the lifting up of thy Head, the Joy of thy Heart, thy Strength, thy Treasure, thy Life, thy Health, thy Peace, thy Rest, thy All, and that for ever. *Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and in Earth there is none that I desire besides thee: My Flesh and my Heart faileth, but God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever.* Psal. 73. 25, 26. This is thy Portion, know it for thy Good, take it for thy own, live upon it, and live up to it.

1. Live upon thy Portion; here thou mayst feed, rejoice, and bless thy self for ever. Let him that blesteth himself on the Earth, bless himself in the God of Truth. Whilst others rejoice in that which is not, enjoy thy God, rejoice in thy Portion, and enjoy thy Soul in him; study to know him more, roll over his Sweetness in thy Mind, see what he is, and what thou hast laid up in God, read over daily his glorious Names, walk through those Chambers of his Presence, his glorious Attributes, his Power, Wisdom, Goodness, Mercy,

Faithfulness,

Faithfulness, Holiness; and behold what Treasures are laid up for his People in each of these; dwell in the Light of the Lord, and let thy Soul be ravish'd with his Love; get out the Marrow and Fatness that thy Portion yields thee. Let others, that are groveling in the Earth, learn by beholding thy Face, how dim their Blazes are to the Brightness of thy Day.

Let thy Delights in God be pure and unmix'd Delights; let thy Spirit be so fill'd with God, and so rais'd above carnal Joys, and the Matters of them, that it be no damp upon thee to have nothing but God: be so wholly spiritual, that spiritual Joys and Delights may be both suited to thee and sufficient for thee; let the Joy of the Lord be thy Strength and thy Life: say with the Prophet, *Hab. 3. 17, 18. Altho the Fig-tree shall not blossom, &c. yet will I rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.*

Take up thy Rest in God; here thou mayst find Rest to thy Soul, when thou hast no other Rock to lean upon. The carnal World can find no solid Rest or Satisfaction in what they dote upon, but thou mayst (Christian) be at rest in thy God; in thy most restless State, in a barren Wilderness, or on a tempestuous Ocean. See what was said by *Moses* to the *Israelites* entering *Canaan*; the same may be apply'd to all true *Israelites*, the spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, and Children of the Promise: *Deut. 33. 26, 27, 28, 29. There is none like unto the God of Jesurun, who rideth upon the Heavens in thy Help, and in his Excellency on the Sky. The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are the everlasting Arms; and he shall thrust out the Enemy from before thee, and shall say, destroy them. Israel then shall dwell in Safety alone, the Fountain of Jacob shall be upon a Land of Corn and Wine, also his Heavens shall drop down Dew. Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee! O People saved by the Lord, the Shield of thy Help, and who is the Sword of thy Excellency; and thine Enemies shall be found Lyars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high Places. See how *Moses*, the Man of God, with his last Breath magnifies the God of Israel, and the Condition of the Israel of God. See the Reverend Mr. Henry's Practical Observations on these Verses.*

C H A P. IX.

CHRIST in the Covenant.

II. **G**OD hath put his Son into this Covenant, and made over him to his People. *Isa. 42. 6. I will give thee for a Covenant:* He who is promis'd as the chief Matter, Surety and Scope of the Covenant, is by a Metonymy call'd the Covenant; that is, I covenant to give thee to the People. And *Isa. 9. 6. it is said, To us a Son is given.*

The Lord Jesus Christ, the second Person in the Trinity, hath, by the Designation of the Father, made over himself in this Covenant, to be the Head and Husband of his Church, and of every particular real Member of it; it is a Marriage-Covenant, in which the Lord takes his People into the nearest Relation to himself, by which they are united to him; and this Union unto Christ is the sure Ground and Foundation of all our Happiness. Man being now by Sin fallen from God, and having set himself thereby at so great a distance from him, this would have stood as an everlasting Bar to Sinners from any Hope or Benefit now from that All-Sufficiency and infinite Fulness that is in God. Whatever Glory and Blessedness there is in the Fruition of God; Wo is me, might the Sinner say, there is a great Gulf fix'd between me and it, over which there is no passing; there is a Partition-Wall rais'd, over which there is no climbing; there is a Hand-writing against me, whilst that stands, all that is in God is nothing to me, but must needs aggravate more my Misery and Condemnation: Were this God mine, I had enough; but Oh how may I obtain! Who shall bring me to God? Why the Lord God hath given thee his Son to undertake for thee, and to be *thy way unto the Father*, *Heb. 10. 19, 20.* to procure Reconciliation for Sinners by the Sacrifice of himself, to purchase them out of the Hand of his infinite Justice, to be a Ransom for them, and to bring in everlasting Righteousness, with which thou mayst be clothed, that thou mayst be brought

brought back again by him to his Father, and stand again in his Presence, from which we were banish'd; and to set us before his Face for ever, in that white and spotless Garment which he has provided for his People. He in whom dwells all Fulness, even the Fulness of the God-head bodily, who hath made Peace by the Blood of his Cross, Col. 1. 2. whose Name is wonderful, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, Isa. 9. 6. This Jesus is granted thee in the Covenant to bring thee to God; to which blessed and glorious Purpose he is exhibited,

1. As the great Prophet of his Church: *A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the Glory of his People, Luke 1. 32. In whom is Life, and the Life is the Light of Men, John 1. 4. A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your Brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you, Acts 3. 22.* He is the Glass in which by Reflection we see the Sun, he brings Life and Immortality to light. Heaven, and Glory, the invisible God, which before were lost and out of reach (as yet to the Heathen World they are) are all discover'd in the Face of Jesus Christ: 2 Cor. 4. 6. *To give us the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ.* He is as real a Prophet now to instruct the Soul, as he is a Priest to intercede for it, or a King to rule it. As God is propitious thro Christ, so he is only an Instructor thro Christ: as the Power of God, in the Conversion of a Soul to himself, so the Wisdom of God, in the Instruction of the Soul, breaks out thro Christ. He is God's Interpreter, by Nature our Understandings are darken'd, Eph. 4. 18. & 5. 8. We are by Sin involv'd in spiritual, which is worse than Egyptian Darkness; but he is the Lord that shews us Light. To discover God to us was the End of his Coming, his Office is to teach: we must receive him therefore as the great Prophet of God's appointing, furnish'd with infinite Wisdom and Skill to bring us to the Knowledge of God, and with efficacious Ability to imprint it upon our Minds by an inward Illumination. Let us therefore lift up our Eyes to him; if we would have Light, we must use the Beams of the Sun. Resignation to him is the first Step to Divine Knowledge: it was given to the Disciples, that had devoted themselves to Christ, *to know the Mysteries of the Kingdom,*

dom, Mark 4. 11. He only can guide us with his Eye, and teach us the *Secrets of Wisdom*, Job 11. 6. He laid the Foundation of the Gospel when here on Earth, he came out from the Father to shew his Mind and Heart therein: He is the great Apostle and High Priest of our Profession; and teaches now, by his Ministers, his Word and Spirit. Let us have therefore a high and solemn Veneration for whatsoever is contain'd in the Scriptures, search them with greatest Diligence; by them it is we may be made wise unto Salvation: but lift up also your Eyes to Christ as a Prophet, begging of him to open your Eyes, to anoint them with his Eye-salve, and seal Instruction, to unlock the Soul, and enlighten your Understanding, that you may behold the wondrous things of his Law, by the Illumination of his Spirit; he hath a Charge from the Father to declare his Name, and he has promis'd to declare it, and will be faithful in it.

2. As our great High Priest. *The Lord our Righteousness, this is his Name*, Jer. 23. 6. To this end he is given to us, (1.) As our propitiatory Sacrifice. 1 John 2. 2. *The Propitiation for our Sins*. 1 Cor. 5. 7. *Christ our Passover*; a Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, who gave himself for his People as a Ransom in our stead, to save us from the Condemnation which we had deserv'd; Mat. 20. 28. Job 33. 24. Sin is a wrong done to God, and therefore there must be a Compensation, an Offering made to God in our stead, for the Satisfaction of his Justice, before he could quit his Controversy against us, and without which we must have lain for ever under his Wrath; and this Christ was pleas'd to undertake for us. *He shall make his Soul an Offering for Sin*, Isa. 53. 10. *He gave himself for us an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling Savour*, Eph. 5. 2. All that was signify'd by the antient Sacrifices and Offerings under the Law, was accomplish'd by him: they were slay'd, kill'd, burn'd; all which were but Shadows of what our blessed Lord endur'd. He is the true and real Sacrifice, wherein provok'd Justice doth rest satisfy'd, his Wrath is appeas'd, and we that were loathsom by reason of Sin, are made acceptable and pleasing unto God; being reconcil'd by the Blood of his Cross, Col. 1. 20. Rom. 3. 25. This Sacrifice of himself was of sufficient Value to satisfy

satisfy God's Justice, that was infinitely offended by our Sins; being the Sacrifice of him who was God. It was of infinite Worth and Dignity, and was accordingly accepted by his Father on the behalf of Sinners. And as the Justice of God could not be satisfy'd without a Ransom, so Sin could not be purg'd out without bearing the Punishment of it; *Eph. 5. 2.* For this end he is said to have *bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree, 1 Pet. 2. 24.* By this he has procur'd the Reconciliation of Sinners unto God; *Eph. 2. 16.* and thro him God is now become propitious and merciful for ever to sinful Man: his Wrath and Displeasure is appeas'd by his thus tendering a full Satisfaction for our Sins, whereby we might be reduc'd again into his Grace and Favour.

He is now given to us, that we may by him be discharg'd from the Curse, to *finish Transgression, to make an end of Sins, to make Reconciliation for Iniquity, and bring in everlasting Righteousness;* and so bring us to God. Whatever Difficulties appear in our way, or Doubts may arise in our Hearts from our Sins, or Guilt, or Poverty, or Impotence; whatever Objections our Fears may hence put in, there is the Blood of the Lamb, this Sacrifice, that will answer all, *Christ our Passover is sacrific'd for us.*

(2.) Christ is given to us as a merciful and faithful High Priest, *Heb. 2. 17.* who having first made an Atonement for us here on Earth, appears now for his People in Heaven; where *he ever lives to make Intercession for us, Heb. 9. 24. & 7. 25. & Isa. 53. 12.* We read, *Exod. 28. 12, 29.* that *Aaron*, as the Type of Christ, was to bear the Names of the Children of *Israel* engraven on Stones, upon his Shoulders, and upon his Breastplate, when he went into the holy Place, for a Memorial before the Lord continually. Thus our Lord is enter'd into the Heavens, now to appear in the Presence of God, with our Names upon his Shoulders, and upon his Heart, for a Memorial before the Lord; there is not the least of Saints, but there his Name is engraven. Here is my Ransom, and behold my ransomed ones: the Lord Christ is there presenting and pleading for the Purchase of his own Blood, those whom he has redeem'd thereby. Whatever Accusers there be, whatever Charge be laid against them, whatever Guilt lies upon them, this

this is sufficient to answer all, their blessed High Priest has himself borne all that was their due, and paid all that they owe, and in his Heart all their Names may be read. He is there presenting himself, and what he has done, for a Memorial before the Lord continually, in order to their Acquittal and Absolution, that they may be accepted of him for ever. The Tears of his Eyes, the Stripes of his Back, the Shame of his Face, the Groans of his Body, the Anguish of his Soul, and the Blood of his Heart for his redeemed ones, are so many Pleas on their Behalf for their Acceptance and Discharge. The Satisfaction made by him was not on his own behalf, but theirs; he took all their Guilt upon himself, and by his own Sufferings made Satisfaction for it, that it might be taken off from them, and that they might be clothed with his Righteousness, and accepted therein.

The Cries of Blood are the strongest Cries, whether against or for the Guilty; and blessed for ever must those Souls be, where the Blood of Christ is crying on their behalf for Pardon and Mercy. And now, Christian, whoever thou art that art in Covenant with the Lord, this Blood is for thee, it pleads, sues, and presses for thy Discharge from all that is upon thee: Thou hast many Cries against thee; Satan cries, thy Sins, thy own Heart, thy Conscience, cry against thee, which, it may be, are amazing to thee: but behold the Blood of the Lamb, the Blood of Christ cries for thee; thou hast an Accuser, thou hast many Adversaries, but thou hast an Advocate with the Father, *Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for thy Sins, 1 John 2. 2. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the Right Hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us; Rom. 8. 33, 34.* Nay farther, thou hast not only a righteous, but a merciful and faithful High Priest and Advocate in Heaven, that is provided of a Sacrifice, and has Bowels of Pity and tender Compassion to offer it for thee, *Heb. 5. 2.* If he could find no other, he can find Arguments enough from thy Woe and Misery to draw forth his Soul towards thee. He is merciful, and his Mercies are tender Mercies; thou art not so tender

of the Wife of thy Bosom, of thy own Flesh, or the Apple of thy Eye, as the Lord is of thee: his Spirit is mov'd for thee, he suffers in thy Sorrows, his Heart breaks over thy broken and undone State, his tender Pity and Compassion will not suffer him to forget thee: he is gone into the Heavens, and there exalted far above all Principalities and Powers, and set down at the Right Hand of God; but no Dignity to which he is exalted, no Distance to which he is remov'd, can make him forget his Friends: he hath carry'd our Names with him as a perpetual Memorial for them. We are unfaithful, and forget our Lord at every turn, every Business that comes, any Trouble, Pleasure, Company perhaps makes us forget our Lord, his Love to us, and our Duty to him. How small a Matter will steal our Hearts from him, yea, stir up Tumults and Rebellions against him? Our Comforts, Hopes, and Needs we have daily of him, will not all prevail to keep him in constant remembrance with us: but tho we have been so forgetful of him, he will not forget us; tho we have been unfaithful in so many things, yet he is in nothing. *2 Tim. 2. 13. He abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself: he would not be true to himself, if he was not faithful to us. If we are really and internally in this Covenant with him, whereby we become Members of his Body, let us not fear, he can be no more unfaithful to our Souls than to himself. If our Case be such as he can help us, or there be any thing wherein he can stead us; if all he hath, his Blood, his Righteousness, his Interest with the Father, will be sufficient for our Help; he hath undertaken to procure it for us, and secure it to us. Faithful is he that hath called you, who also will do it; 1 Theff. 5. 24. 1 Cor. 1. 9.*

This now is that Jesus that is given to us as our propitiatory Sacrifice, as our merciful and faithful High Priest, who suffer'd here on Earth, and is gone into the Heavens for us; appearing there in his red Robes, those Garments rolled in Blood, with those glorious Whites thereon, Pardon, Peace, Absolution, and Acceptance, with the Names of his ransomed ones engraven on his Heart, and upon his Shoulders: This is that Jesus who is the Lord our Righteousness.

(3.) As our Lord and King. *He shall be a Priest upon his Throne, Zech. 6. 13. A King shall reign in Righteousness, Isa. 52. 1. In him shall the Gentiles trust: and the Government shall be upon his shoulder, Isa. 9. 6.* God hath more care of his People, than to leave the Government of them again on themselves: and therefore he hath put all Power into Christ's hand, to do whatever he will; hath made him his King, to do what pleaseth him in Heaven and in Earth; to do all that he himself has purpos'd, and to accomplish the Good-pleasure of his Grace in and towards his People, whom he has given to him: *Mat. 28. 18. He has committed all Judgment to the Son, to save and condemn whom he will; and so far as the Kingdom of God goeth, or is extended, he may do any thing. John 5. 21. As the Father raiseth up the Dead, so the Son quickeneth whom he will: for as the Father hath Life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have Life in himself.* He has given him an absolute Power and Authority for the Good of his Church, derivatively from himself, and in his stead. *Ask of me, and I will give thee, &c. Psal. 2. 8. Rejoice, O Daughter of Zion! Behold thy King cometh unto thee! he is just, having Salvation; Zech. 9. 9.* As a Priest he has purchas'd it, and as a King he bestows it on his People. He is a King to gather them, and a King to govern, defend, and save them; to save them both from their temporal Enemies, the Men of this evil World, *Psal. 47. 9.* and from their spiritual Enemies; also to save them from their Sins: *Mat. 1. 21. Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins.* As he will be above all his Enemies in that wherein they deal proudly (as he was above the Egyptians, *Exod. 18. 11.*) to break them in pieces with a Rod of Iron; so he will be above his own People, to rule them with a golden Scepter. And this is a Blessing of the Covenant of Grace, to be thus under his gracious Government and Protection. Whither would Satan and our own Lusts carry us? What Tyranny would Sin exercise within, and how would our own Lusts lord it over us? And how easily would our wily and potent Enemies ruin us, were we left to our own Government? We know little how far we should wander, nor where we should fix, nor whence we should receive Counsel, Protection, and Salvation, were there

no Lord over us; but to be under the Government of such a King, one that is so wise and powerful, so meek and merciful, a King that is so holy and righteous, may well be esteem'd by us a Wonder of Mercy. And how unthankful and foolish is this rebellious World! Impatient of Subjection under so easy a Yoke and Government, groaning under that Duty and Discipline which would be of such unspeakable advantage to us; when we are ready to say, *We will not have this Man to rule over us*; and therein forsaking our own Mercies: for alas! who then shall save us? So long as we keep our selves from under the Rules and Laws of Christ, complain of Hardship in them, and of the Strictness of them, of the Discipline being too severe, and of our Want of Liberty as a Burden; this is the Language of such a Complaint: "Alas! I am so limited and hedg'd in on all hands, that there is no room or liberty left me to be miserable: If I will be Christ's, I must be happy." We stand continually in as much need of his Kingly Office and Government over us, as of his Satisfaction and Intercession for us. Now this Benefit and gracious Undertaking of Christ implies these things.

1. That the Lord will bring his People from under the Power and Dominion of other Lords, which have gotten the Superiority over them, and bring them into subjection to himself alone: so that whereas they might say concerning the time before, as *Isa. 26. 13. Other Lords have had dominion over us besides thee*; yet now their Power shall be broken, they shall rule over them no more, but they shall be subject to Christ only. When a King makes a Covenant with a People to be King over them, he then covenants with them to save them out of the hands of all their Enemies, to suffer no foreign Power to tyrannize over them: so here the Lord promises that no Tyrant shall rule over his People; neither Sin, nor Satan, nor the World, nor the Lusts of their own Hearts, but he himself will rule over them.

2. When he hath deliver'd us from our Enemies, then he will rule, govern, and command us, as our rightful Lord and Owner, and appoint us what we shall do to please him: which is infinitely for our own benefit and advantage. Tho he communicates himself to us in all his Goodness, Grace, and Mercy, yet he will not lose his

his Sovereignty over us. Tho he has advanc'd his People so far, as that all the World are but Servants to minister to them for their good, yet he will himself be exalted above them. *Moses* was call'd a God unto *Aaron*, because he was to command, appoint, and direct *Aaron* in all things; and *Aaron* was to execute all, according to his direction: so the Lord is to be God over us, to have the government of us. We must not speak and act as if we were our own, but according to his Command. As a Man when he makes a Covenant of Marriage, and takes the Person into the nearest Relation to himself, and endows her with all that he hath; yet covenants with her to be her Head, to rule her, that she shall be subject to him, to please him; or as when a Man hires a Servant, he expects he should submit to the Government and Orders of his Family: so when the Lord takes us into this near Relation, into Covenant with himself, it is that we shall be his Servants, to do his Will, Pleasure, and Commandment. When *Isaac* sent away his Son *Jacob* to *Padan-Aram*, he blessed him, but withal he gave him a Charge; *Gen.* 28. 1, 6. so when the Lord gives this Blessing to us, that he will be ours, in Covenant with us, the Charge goeth with it; "See that you keep the Charge of the Lord your God, and that you do whatsoever I command you."

3. Because the Lord knows (as he speaks himself, *Isa.* 48. 4.) that we are obstinate, and our Neck is an Iron Sinew, &c. And are ready to say, as *Jer.* 2. 31. *We are Lords, we will not come at thee; we will have none to command us: Therefore the Lord promiseth this also in his Covenant with us, that he will subdue the Rebellion of Spirit that is in us, and the Stoutness of our Hearts, that he will bend and bow these stiff Necks of ours, and make us pliable to his Will in all things. He will subdue our Rebellions, Mic.* 7. 19. He will over-rule our unruly, proud, and presumptuous Spirits, and cause us to keep his Statutes and Commandments to do them (for our own good) *Ezek.* 36. 27. & *Chap.* 20. 33-38. These words are a Promise of Grace: Tho they had other Purposes in their minds, and were thinking to go after their Idols, and to become as other Countries; yet saith the Lord, "It shall not be so, I will over-rule your sinful idolatrous Hearts, and you shall not serve these false

and

"Gods

“Gods you are doating upon, which would ruin you;
“but I will bring you to my self, and you shall serve
“me, and it may be well with you.” *I will bring you
into the Wilderness, and there plead with you, and make
you pass under the Rod, and bring you into the Bond of the
Covenant.* And tho the Lord sometimes corrects his own
Children, and shews himself angry with them; yet this
he does in mercy to them; as he has promis’d, *Psal. 89.*
throughout. So that this is now a Blessing of the Co-
venant, and an Expression of his Faithfulness to his Peo-
ple. This is the fruit of all their Chastisements and
Corrections, to take away their Sin. He makes those
Messengers of his Wrath to become means of Good un-
to his People: he lays his Yoke on them, to tame their
unruly Spirits, and make them more receptive of his
Grace. As a Father rules over his Children in Love and
tender Compassion to them, and yet by reason of their
unruly Disposition, he is sometimes forc’d to shew him-
self angry with them by some sharp Corrections: so it
is with the Lord, in the Rule that he exerciseth over his
People in Covenant with him.

4. When he hath subdu’d our Spirits to himself, and
brought us to submit unto his Will, then he will, under
his easy and gentle Government, teach, instruct, and di-
rect us in the way wherein he would have us walk: he
will guide us by his Counsel, and with his Eye, *Psal. 32.*
8. And if either Ignorance or Heedlessness turn us out
of our way, which the Lord knows we are too prone
unto, he will restore us, and bring us into our way a-
gain, by his Rod and Staff: *Psal. 23. 3, 4. & Isa. 48. 17.*
And this he promiseth to do, *Isa. 30. 21. Thou shalt hear
a Word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it,
when you turn to the right hand or to the left.* We are
apt to hear and pass by, as tho we heard not; therefore
the Lord is said to call after us by his Spirit, as one that
speaks behind us, and cries to us, *This is the way,* that
he may bring us again into it. This he also promiseth,
Psal. 25. 9, 12. that he will guide us in Judgment, and in
the way which he himself chuseth for us.

And thus the Lord will be a King over and a Ruler of
his People, to rule and order them according to his own
Mind, in Judgment and with tender Mercy: which is
no small Benefit and Blessing of the Covenant of Grace.

As it is said of Solomon, that *because the Lord loved Israel, therefore he gave them such a King*, 2 Chron. 2. 11. so because the Lord loveth his People, that he taketh into Covenant with himself, therefore he will be King over them, to rule and govern them. Hence the Prophet joins these two together, *Isa. 49. 10.* God that hath compassion upon them will lead them; he will take the Guidance of them upon himself. When he will manifest his Wrath against a People, then he suffers them to walk after their own Wills; but here is infinite Grace and Mercy, when he takes them into his own Government. As it is for the Good of a Child to be under the Government of a godly and tender Father, and for the Good of the Flock to be under the Guidance of a skilful Shepherd; so is the Yoke and Government of Christ to those that are in Covenant with him. Consider this in a few particulars:

1. Consider what Power we are under by Nature. We are under (as has been said before) the Dominion of the most cruel Tyrants: Satan the God of this World is Lord over us, while we are in our natural and unregenerate Estate, and out of the Covenant; we are holden under his power, who labours to make a prey of our Souls: *Eph. 2. 2.* & *Act. 26. 18.* Now what a blessed Change is this, to be brought from under the Power of Satan, and to be translated under the Government of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the blessed God in him?

2. Consider how unable we are to guide and govern our selves, as *Jer. 10. 23.* It is not in Man to guide his own way; the best Souls would wander into the way of eternal Perdition, if they were left unto themselves. And therefore when the Lord will become our Guide, to lead us into the way of Life, how great a Benefit and Mercy is it? As it is to a Traveller, who when he is ready to miss his way, meets with a Guide to direct and set him into it again; how much more when we are ready to miss the way to eternal Life? We are as Sheep, a foolish Creature, which is apt to wander: and this David found, *Psal. 119. 176.* and therefore prays to the Lord to lead him.

3. As we are unable to do it our selves, so there is no other Creature that can guide us aright unto Life; *Isa. 51. 18.* They may perhaps guide our Feet, but our Hearts

Hearts will be erring and wandering still; as the *Israelites*, tho they had *Moses* himself, that great Prophet, to guide them, yet they erred in their Hearts: *Psal. 95. 10.*

4. Consider the great Peace which accompanies and follows the Guidance of the Lord. *Jer. 6. 16. Ask for the old Paths, saith the Lord, which is the good way, and you shall find Rest to your Souls.* So *Psal. 119. 165. Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing shall offend them.* And *Isa. 26. 23. Thou wilt keep him in perfect Peace (in Peace, Peace, as in the Original) whose Mind is staid on thee, because he trusteth in thee.* Who can express the sweet Peace of the People of God, when their Hearts are framed to a willing Obedience to the Guidance and Government of the Lord? Whereas when they are led by themselves, and their own Hearts, then there is nothing but Confusion and Disturbance: *There is no Peace to the Wicked, Isa. 58. 22.* It is a Misery that cometh upon a People when God will not guide them, but withdraws his Government over them. When there was no King in *Israel*, then they had many Miseries and Troubles; much more is it so in spiritual regards: when God leaves us to the Wanderings of our own Hearts, how many Miseries and Sins are we subject to? This was their Curse, *Rom. 1. 24.* to be given up to themselves, and then they ran into all manner of Wickedness. It was the Misery of the Gentiles, *Acts 14. 16.* while God suffer'd them to walk in their own ways. Hence the Church complains, after they had erred from the ways of God, and their Hearts had been harden'd from God's Fear, they shut up all in this; *We are as they over whom thou never bearest rule.* There is the Misery they complain of. It is one of the great Blessings of the People of God, to be taken under his Government.

Let us learn from hence not to count our Condition a State of Liberty of such a kind, as if we might walk after our own Desires or Ways, or to think it a privilege if we could do so. Indeed there is a spiritual Liberty from our Enemies, but there is Subjection requir'd to the Lord. We must not look only after Gifts, Mercies, Kindnesses, Pardon, and such Tokens and Pledges of Grace; but look also for this, to be under the Lord's Government, and not count it our Misery, but our Blessedness to be so, and that he will take the

care of us. Whither would our unruly Hearts carry us, if he should leave us to our selves? Who is it that hath any experience of the sinful Evils that are in his Heart, but will acknowledg this to be a great Benefit, that the Lord should rule over him with his out-stretched Arm? If God leave *Hezekiah* a little, how is his Heart lifted up with Pride? that he must have a Prophet sent to him on purpose to humble him. If God leave *David* to himself, into what Evils is he not ready to fall? And is there not the same Spirit in us? The more Contrariety and Opposition there is in us to the Will of God, the greater mercy it is, that he will be King over us. When therefore God beginneth with us, to over-rule the Rebellionousness of our Hearts, and to bring them into order, let us take heed that we spurn not with the heel, nor lift up our selves, *Psal. 32. 9.* but let us humble our selves, and submit our selves to him, that he may take the Guidance of us into his own hands. Let us hear the Rod and kiss it, and take it as a Mercy that he is pleas'd to take the care of us, to correct our Wanderings, and bring us back into his ways of Peace. Take heed of walking contrary to him, lest he say to us as to the *Israelites*, that *he will reign over us no more.* But let us come in and seek the Lord, lay hold on his Covenant, and give up our selves to be his People, that he may reign over us: Let us thus come within the Kingdom of his Grace here, and he will prepare a Kingdom of Glory for us hereafter. The Lord hath already an absolute Sovereignty over us, and an indisputable Right to rule and govern us, as our Creator and Owner; but he is pleas'd now to exercise this Power over us, as our God in Covenant, in and thro Christ, to whom he hath committed it for our good and benefit. All Power is put into his hands in Heaven and in Earth, and the Government is laid on his shoulders for the good of his People.

5. As our Head and Husband. He is given to be Head over all things to the Church, and to be the Head and Husband of it, *Eph. 1. 22, 23.* and of every Member of it in particular, *1 Cor. 11. 3.* Believers are all join'd to the Lord, *1 Cor. 6. 17.* United in Christ as Fellow-Members, united unto Christ as their common Head; from which all the Body, by Joints and Bands, having Nourishment ministred, and knit together, increa-

seth

seth with the Increase of God; Col. 2. 19. They are marry'd to Christ: *I have espoused you to one Husband*, 2 Cor. 11. 2. They are brought into the nearest Relation and most intimate Union unto him; they are said to be one with Christ, as he is one with the Father; to dwell in Christ, and Christ in them; to be join'd to the Lord, and to be one Spirit. This mystical Union betwixt Christ and Believers is shadow'd out in Scripture by Similitudes, intimating the Compleatness of this Union: as that he is the Head, they the Members; he the Root, they the Branches; he the Foundation, they the Building; he the Husband, they the Wife. All these Expressions point to that Oneness and Conjunction which is betwixt Christ and Believers, in which the general Nature of this mystical Union doth consist.

As there was a necessity of Christ's Union with us in our Nature, in order to our Redemption by his Death; so there is also of this mystical and spiritual Union, whereby we are interested in those saving Benefits and Blessings purchas'd by it; that the Person of a Believer should be united to him, whereby he is ours, and we are his: Cant. 2. 16. *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.* We are by one Spirit baptiz'd into one Body. As by our Union with Adam in our Nature, his Sin became ours, we being then in his Loins; so by our being united to Christ, his Righteousness is imputed to us. Believers that are within the Covenant internally and really, are united to their blessed Head the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Body is to the Soul: and as the Members of the natural Body are quickned by the Soul, so the second Adam becomes to all his Members, who are intimately united to him, a quickning Spirit. There is such a real Conjunction with Christ, as gives the Believer a new Being, and Christ becomes to him the Principle and Fountain of a spiritual Life: 1 John 5. 12. *He that hath the Son, hath Life*; and whosoever abideth not in him, presently withereth, and can bring forth no fruit. And it must needs be thus; for,

1st. From this Union to Christ followeth a Communication of Influences; [*having Nourishment ministred.*] Christ, our Head is our Fountain of Life; from him we live, and are nourish'd, and maintain'd in Life; he is our Joseph, all the Treasures of the Holy Land are with

him: *In him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*, Col. 2. 3. *It pleased the Father, that in him all Fulness should dwell*, Col. 1. 19. He is the only-begotten Son of God, full of Grace and Truth. Here note,

1. What Grace there is in Christ.

(1.) The Grace of Union: The human Nature of Christ hath receiv'd the high Grace and Favour to be personally united to the second Person in the Godhead; by virtue whereof, the Fulness of the Godhead is said to dwell in him bodily, i. e. personally, or substantially, in opposition to the Types and Shadows of the Old Testament, in which God (in a figure) is said to dwell; as also in the Tabernacle, in the Ark of the Covenant, in the Temple, &c. but in Christ he dwells personally and substantially.

(2.) Habitual Grace is eminently in him: All those moral Perfections wherein stands the Holiness of his Nature, his Love and Fear of God, his Humility, Meekness, Patience; in sum, his perfect Conformity to the Image and whole Will of God. *Such an High Priest became us, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners*; Heb. 7. 26.

(3.) As Head of his Church, so he is full of Grace, for the continual Supply of it.

2. That he is said to be full of all Grace, and that in a double respect:

(1.) As he hath all Grace in himself, and that in the greatest Excellency and Perfection of it.

(2.) As it is in him in the greatest measure: that Grace which is in Christ, is in the highest perfection and greatest measure that he is capable of.

3. That this Fulness of Christ is ours, and for us, John 1. 16. *Of his Fulness do we receive, Grace for Grace*. Col. 3. 2. *Your Life is hid with Christ in God*. Your spiritual Life, Grace; and your eternal Life, Glory: 1 John 5. 11. *Our Life is said to be hid with Christ in three respects*:

(1.) It is hid in Christ as the Effect in the Cause: as the Life of the Branches is hid in the Root, so is the Life of a Christian in Christ; he is our Root.

(2.) It is deposited with Christ, committed to his Trust and Custody; with him it is secur'd, and put into safe hands.

(3.) The

(3.) The Dispensation of it is committed to him; from him it is at his pleasure to be deriv'd to us. Of his Fulness we receive: the Son hath Life in himself, and he giveth it to whom, when, and in what measure he pleaseth.

Christian, art thou nothing in thy self? Thou hast enough in thy Jesus. Art thou dark? He is a Fountain of Light. Art thou dead? He is a Fountain of Life. Art thou poor and low, weak in Knowledge, in Faith, Love, Patience, or in any other Grace? He's a Treasury of all Grace: and what he is, he is for thee. Is he wise, holy, meek, merciful, humble, patient? He is so for thee. Is he strong, rich, full? 'tis for thy sake. As he was empty, weak, poor, upon our accounts; so for us he is mighty, rich, and full. Whilst therefore we bewail our own Poverty and Weakness, which we have so much reason to do; O let us bless our selves in the Lord, and rejoice in his Riches, Righteousness, and Strength.

2dly. From a Believer's Union with Christ followeth a Complication of Interests. As the Head and Body, as the Husband and Wife; so Christ, and Believers in Covenant with him, are mutually concern'd. As the Husband conveyeth to the Wife a Title to what he hath, and as the Wife holds of the Husband; so it is between Christ and his Church: all they have is in and thro' him; they hold of him who is their Head, and whatsoever is his is theirs. His God is their God; his Father is their Father; his Blood, his Bowels, his Merits, his Spirit, his Victories, all the Spoils he hath gotten, all the Revenues and Income of his Life and Death, all is theirs. His Obedience, Sufferings, Life, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Session at the Right Hand of God, is for their good and advantage: all which he did as their Head, and he reigneth, and hath in their names taken possession of that Inheritance which he purchas'd for them. This is that Jesus which is given to us, and thus is he granted and made over to all his People in this Covenant of God.

C H A P. X.

The HOLY SPIRIT in the Covenant.

III. **G**OD hath put his Spirit into the Covenant, who is the Almighty and Eternal Spirit, the Holy Spirit of Glory and of God. Tho the Divine Power belongs in common to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who being one and the same God, concur in the same Work; and whatever is done by the Spirit, is done by the Father and Son also: yet their Concurrence is in a way proper to each Person, and whatever the Father and Son doth, is communicated to us by the Spirit.

This Holy and Eternal Spirit was first poured forth upon our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, to anoint him our Redeemer, and to furnish and qualify him for that great Undertaking: *Isa. 61. 1. & Isa. 11. 2, 3, 4.* It is he also that is the Bond of Union between Christ and Believers; he works, promotes, and brings that about; and he is promis'd to each Member, that is united to him: *Ezek. 36. 27. I will put my Spirit within you.* Believers are made one with Christ, and then they become the Habitation of the Holy Spirit; he takes up his special Residence in them, as in his own Temple, *1 Cor. 3. 16. & 6. 17.* Hence the Apostle says, *If any one have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his;* *Rom. 8. 9.* And this Holy Spirit, by his gracious Operations, works in them the Habits of all saving Graces; *Ezek. 36. 27.* And he doth also by his immediate, strong, and special Influence, preserve those Graces in Life; *Eph. 3. 16.* He makes them also to grow and increase, *Hos. 14. 5.* and quickens and excites them to Action. But more particularly, he is granted to them,

I. As a Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation, *Eph. 1. 17.* to enlighten them, and shine into their Hearts; to give them the Knowledge of the Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that they may know what the Hope of his Calling is, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints: to counterwork the Spirit of this World, whose

whose work is to blind Mens eyes, *lest the Light of the glorious Gospel should shine unto them*; 2 Cor. 4. 4, 5, 6.

This is he by whom the Father hath called us out of *Darkness into his marvellous Light*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. The Light that the Holy Spirit brings in, is so in three respects:

(1.) It is a marvellous thing, that ever Light should come into such dark Souls; that those who were born blind, and upon whom the God of this World had for many Years together been trying his Skill, to thicken their Darkness, and to increase and seal them up under it; that ever such Eyes should be open'd, and the Light of Life should shine into such Hearts. To see Stones live, dead Stocks or dry Bones walking in the streets, is not more full of wonder, than to behold blind Sinners receiving their Sight; those who were once Darkness, to become light in the Lord.

(2.) They are marvellous things which this Light discovers, Wonders of Divine Love, Wisdom, Pity, Patience, and Mercy, wonderful Providences and Deliverances; that those things, which we despis'd before and stumbled at, as mere Foolishness and Fancies, we should now see and admire, even to astonishment; that that Jesus who was *to the Jews a Stumbling-Block, and to the Greeks Foolishness*, should be to the same Men, when call'd, *the Wisdom of God, and the Power of God*. The deep things of God, and the unsearchable Riches of Christ; hidden Treasures they now discover in him, which by the Spirit are reveal'd to them: *To you that believe, he is precious, altogether lovely and beautiful, full of Grace and Truth*. And these things are reveal'd to them with marvellous Clearness; the Beauty of Christ, and the sweet Influences of the Holy Spirit, which they were before strangers to. What Glory and Excellency there is in every Grace, in Holiness and Righteousness, in Peace of Conscience, and Joy in the Holy Ghost! all which God hath reveal'd to them by his Spirit: *For the Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God*. And by this Holy Spirit it is, that we are made to know the things that are freely given to us of God.

(3.) Again, there are marvellous Evils, as well as good things, that by this Light are discover'd and brought to light: Sin with all the hidden things of Darkness that lay below in those Chambers of Death, *Ezek. 8. 7.* to the

the end: the Secrets of the evil Heart of Man, the Deceitfulness and desperate Wickedness that is in it. Sin appears a wonder to a savingly enlighten'd Soul, exceeding sinful, and a World of Wickedness. They now discern what Unkindness, Ingratitude, and Folly, Enmity and Rebellion, is lodg'd in the Bowels of every Sin, that Death and Hell, and an Eternity of Misery is the Issue of it. What once appear'd pleasant and delightful, or at least, if an Evil, yet but a Trifle, and scarce worth regarding; becomes, by the Illumination of this blessed Spirit, a Matter of Terror, a Plague and Burden, Bitterness, Shame, and Sorrow; and appears of so provoking and heinous a nature, that instead of murmuring and repining under the least Suffering and Punishment of it; he wonders now at the infinite Mercy, Patience, and Forbearance of God, that such Affronts and Provocations continually against him, had not long since turn'd the whole Earth into a Hell.

And for thy Comfort, Christian, whose Complaint it is that thou canst not see, nor feel, nor mourn, under a Sense of these things, nor thy Heart break under all that Guilt that lies upon thee; that it is so hard, that neither Tears nor Groans, nor scarce a Sigh, the sight of all this Evil will fetch out of thee; that complainest of a dead and senseless Heart, a blind and sottish Mind, under the want of a melting, mourning, broken Spirit: O beg the Light of this Holy Spirit, who by his Almighty Power can easily and effectually open thy Eyes, and affect thy Heart, and draw out that Shame and Sorrow which thou wantest. Be not discourag'd, do not say, This Rock will never break, I may go sighing for Sighs, and mourning for Tears, but all in vain; that thy Heart is past feeling and insensible, and that Repentance is hid from thy eyes. Do not thus discourage thy self, but wait for this blessed Spirit; open to it, and thou shalt see flowing in such Streams of Light, as shall flow forth in Tears of Self-abasement and of Self-abhorrence for thy Sins.

It's prophesied of the unbelieving World, *Isa. 53.* that when they should see Christ, they should see no Beauty in him; which indeed is wonderful. What is Christ more than an ordinary Man? What is thy Beloved more than other Beloveds? What is there in Faith and Holiness,

Holiness, Peace of Conscience, Joy in the Holy Ghost, and all those Graces which he has purchased so dearly for us, that we should desire them, and thirst after them? It is clearly reveal'd by this Holy Spirit, that there is an inexpressible Beauty and Amiability in these things, so that Christ is now most apparently in their Eyes and Apprehensions altogether lovely.

As Folly, and Falshood, and Sin is made manifest to them in its wonderful Ugliness and Deformity, *Rom. 7.* so also is Truth, and Holiness, and Goodness, in their wonderful Glory and Beauty. Wonder not then at those that are made sensible of these things, that they run not with you after the same Follies and Vanities which you do your selves; that they do not speak and act as you, and as formerly perhaps they themselves had done. Take heed you blaspheme not the Holy Spirit, call not his Light Darkness, nor put your Darkness for Light; but bewail the Darkness you are your selves yet under, while you are so insensible of these things: seek for this blessed Light, pray earnestly for it, and faint not; Lord Jesus that I may receive my Sight! and you shall have it. *Luke 11. 13. How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

Beclouded Christian, who goest on bemoaning thy self, complaining of thy spiritual Wants, thy Senseless-ness and Stupidity; that the Sun is but as a Spark to thee, that thou walkest in Darkness, seest little in Sin, of the Evil of it, so as to abhor it; little of that Beauty that is in thy Saviour, for which he should be admir'd by thee. Thou fearest the Gospel is hid from thee, and doubtest 'tis still Night in thy Soul: hearken, for thy Encouragement and Comfort, as little as thou seest of Christ, dost thou see so much, that thou prizest, and lovest, and cleavest to him above all? Dost thou see so much in Sin, as to loath and shun it above all things; and dost thou walk in that little Light thou hast? Dost thou love and long, wait and cry for more Light? O send forth thy Light and thy Truth, lift up the Light of thy Countenance! Make haste, my Beloved! O Sun of Righteousness shine upon me! O that I might once see thy Face, as the Sun looking over the Mountains! Now is this thy Voice? Are these the Breathings of thy Soul? Be of good comfort; these are

108 *The Holy Spirit is the Covenant*

are the Glimmerings and Groanings of that Holy Spirit within thee, which has already deliver'd thee from Darknes, and will bring thee forth into his marvellous Light; thou shalt know, if thou follow on to know the Lord. The Glory of the Lord is risen upon thee: tho yet as to thy sense it's neither Night nor perfect Day, *in the Evening it shall be light, Zech. 14. 7.*

2. As a Spirit of Holiness and Sanctification. He is given as an holy and sanctifying Spirit, *2 Thess. 2. 13.* He comes to change us into his own Nature, to make us Partakers of his Holiness: He is a *Refiner's Fire* and *Fuller's Soap*, *Mal. 3. 2.* to purge, and work, and wash off the Filth and Corruption of our Natures. *Isa. 4. 4.* it's said he shall be to the Church a *Spirit of Judgment* and a *Spirit of Burning*, to wash away the Filth of the Daughters of Sion, and to purge the Blood of Jerusalem: to consume and destroy the inward Lusts of their Hearts. This he is to every real Christian; the Spirit of the Lord first discovers and convinceth of Sin, judgeth betwixt Light and Darknes, Grace and Sin, and then gives sentence against those Sins, and condemns them. The Spirit of Sanctification is a Spirit of Mortification: *Rom. 8. 13.* *If ye (through the Spirit) do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.*

The Spirit implants the Soul into Christ, gives it an Interest in, and brings it under the Influence of his Death. *Christus crucifixus est Christus crucifigens*: 'tis the Death of Christ that is the Death of Sin. These Thieves are crucify'd with him; *Rom. 6. 6.* *Our old Man is crucify'd with Christ, that the Body of Sin might be destroy'd, that henceforth we should not serve Sin.*

The Spirit raises up another Party in the Soul to oppose Sin, brings Grace in to take up Arms against it; Grace doth not only fight against Sin, but is in the very nature of it the Death of Sin; as the Generation of a new Form is the Corruption of the old, as Humility is the Death of Pride, Meekness is the Death of sinful Passion, Patience of Impatience, &c.

The Spirit excites and stirs up the Soul against Sin, sets it a praying against it. The Spirit of Grace is a Spirit of Supplication, fetches down Hailstones and Thunderbolts from Heaven, whereby these *Amorites* are destroy'd. Farther, this Holy Spirit presses the Soul to

set

The HOLY SPIRIT in the Covenant. 109

set a watch against it, to deal wisely with it, to keep it low, by cutting off all Provision from the Flesh, restraining and keeping it short of all those fleshy Objects, which would keep it in heart; and so it is starv'd to death: 1 Cor. 9. 27. It's true, our greatest Wisdom, Watchfulness, Abstinence, and Self-denial, and all external means alone, are not sufficient to kill one Lust: it is the Spirit that killeth, the Flesh profiteth nothing; all outward Attempts would otherwise be in vain, but these are the means in the hand of the Spirit, whereby Sin is mortify'd. *If ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live; Rom. 8. 13.* If ye pray in the Spirit, watch in the Spirit, curb and keep short, and keep under this Body, still taking in the Assistance of the Spirit; then it shall die.

Thy Complaints, Christian, perhaps are many; thou sojournest in *Mesech*, and hast thy Habitation in the Tents of *Kedar*; the *Canaanite* is yet in the Land: thou goest mourning daily because of the Oppressor; those spiritual Wickednesses which lie in thy Heart, and war in thy Members; the Pride, the Vanity, and Earthliness that is in thee; that Enmity and Rebellion against the Law of thy Mind, and the Law of God: *When I would do good, evil is present with me; I cannot do the things that I would.* I can with no peace serve my God or my Soul; my Duties are either prevented or polluted, my Comfort wasted, or disappears; when my Soul is a little gotten upon the wing, it is presently check'd and pull'd down again. *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death!* Rom. 7. 24. Why yet comfort thy self, *tho the Enemy come upon thee as a Flood, yet the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against him; Isa. 59. 19.* Thou complaineest thy Gold is become Dross, thy Wine mix'd with Water; yet he will turn his hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy Dross, and take away all thy Tin. Tho these Bryars and Thorns be set in battel against thee, yea and against him also, yet he will go through them, he will burn them together; *Isa. 27. 4.* Thou complaineest thy Garments are defil'd, thy Glory is stain'd, and the Image of thy God so defac'd, that there is but here and there a spot of it left upon thee; thou art black, but not comely; thou wouldest be Holiness to thy Lord, but thou art an

110 The HOLY SPIRIT in the Covenant.

an Offence to him. Holiness is still thy Love, and thy Desire, and Longing; but it flies from thee, it is rather thy Wish than Hope: thou canst weep over, but canst not weep out thy Deformity; that thy Grace is so weak, thou fearest it's not likely to live, and much less to thrive and flourish. Thus thou goest mourning, sighing, and fainting in thy Mind; yet seeking unto the Lord to look upon thy Sorrow and thy Sin, to wash and help thee: why the Lord God hath sent thee Help out of his Sanctuary, and his Strength out of Zion. The eternal Spirit is come down on purpose to give battle to the Flesh, to subdue thy Iniquities, and bring all those that rise up against thee under thy feet. Thou mistakest thy self, and these Enemies of thy Soul, if thou thinkest they will be conquer'd by one Blow of thy Arm: this Kind goeth not out so, nor by might, nor by Power, much less by Weakness and by Flesh, by any weak Attempts of thy own, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. 'Tis the work of an Almighty Spirit and Power, to relieve and cleanse such an Heart as thine. But what thou canst not do, being weak through the Flesh; behold this blessed Spirit comes down to do it for thee. Thou hast prov'd thy own Weakness, lay hold now on everlasting Strength; he stands at the door and knocks: Wilt thou be made clean? open to him, and with him Deliverance comes in. He stands at the Pool stirring the Waters for thee; put in thy crippled Soul; and be heal'd of thy spiritual Diseases: say to him, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean; and thou shalt soon have this Answer, I will, be thou clean.

3. As a Spirit of Truth and Direction. *John 16: 13.* He shall guide them by his Counsel, he shall lead them in the way that they shall go. *Isa. 30. 21.* They shall hear a word behind them, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it; when they are turning to the right hand or to the left. He shall lead them into all Truth, to prevent Mistakes; and into all Righteousness, to prevent Miscarriages: He shall be their Guide, and their Strength also; they shall be led by the Spirit, excited, assisted, and carry'd on in the Power of the Spirit in the way that they should go: He will cause them to walk in the Statutes of the Lord. Whatever thy Waywardness or Wandorings have been; thy Feebleness or Fickleness that is in thee; whatever

Tempta-

The HOLY SPIRIT in the Gospel. 111

Temptations; thou mustest with, to turn thee aside out of the right way; or whatever thy Doubts are that may arise in thy Heart, I shall one day or other perish from the way, and be a lost Sheep at last: yet the Conduct of this Holy Spirit shall be prosperous, and the Event shall be sure; he shall so guide thee by his Counsel, that he shall bring thee to Glory. He shall gather his Lambs with his Arm, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young; Isa. 40. 11.

14. As a Spirit of Comfort and Consolation. John 16. 7. he is call'd the Comforter. He shall come to thee, and abide with thee, to supply the absence of their Redeemer, to support them under their Affliction, and to witness their Adoption, to seal them up unto the Day of Redemption, and to be the Earnest of their Inheritance; Eph. 1. 14.

Our blessed Lord says, He shall take of mine, and shew unto you; John 16. 14. Not only of those Truths and Treasures of Wisdom that are in Christ (tho' that is specially intended) but also of his Love, his Righteousness, his Holiness, and all those Treasures of Grace and Mercy that are hid up in him: as if our blessed Lord had said, "Whatever there is in me, that may stand to you in any stead, or yield you any Relief or Support, this Holy Spirit shall bring it down to you, my Blood, and the Pardon it has purchas'd for you, my Bowels, and those Compassions that are working in me towards you. My Prayers and Intercessions I shall be offering up on your behalf; he shall take of all those Treasures of Grace and everlasting Consolations, which are laid up for you with and in me, and shall shew them unto you. As little as you have of your own to comfort you, either in your Hearts, or otherwise in the World, he shall shew what I have to refresh and comfort you."

O Christians, a Sight of Christ in our Sorrows, Fears, or under our thickest Darkness, what Light and Comfort would it bring in? When we look into our Hearts, and are astonish'd at what appears there, at the Blindness and Hardness, the Poverty and Emptiness, the Guilt and Treachery, Pride, Peevishness, vain and sinful Thoughts; those vile Affections and filthy Lusts, that are swarming and often working in us: or when we look into the World,

112 The HOLY SPIRIT in the Covenant

World, trembling at what we behold there; the Malice, Craft, Wickedness, and Power that is engag'd against us; the furious Spirits, fiery Tongues, the fierce Looks, and violent Hands ready to be employ'd against us; and can see little Relief from any Creatures, so that our Hearts are ready to faint under it. Now at such a time a sight of what is laid up for us in our blessed Lord, and shew'd unto us by his Spirit, his Love, and Care, and tender Concern for us, and the Treasures that are laid up with him, to encourage our Love, and reward our Faithfulness to him. O how will this make all our Darkness depart, and turn the Shadow of Death into the Morning!

This is the Holy Spirit given to those that are in Christ, and within the Bonds of this gracious Covenant; to enlighten, quicken, and strengthen them, to be the Guide of their Ways, and the Stay of their Hearts; to uphold their Graces, and maintain their Peace; to subdue their Enemies, and their Fears from them; to secure from Temptations, or succour under them; to wipe off their Reproach, or to make it their Crown and Matter of Rejoicing; to heal their Diseases, or to do them good by them; to help all their Infirmities, and to work all their Works in them and for them; and to make their Yoke easy, and their Burden light: to turn their Sighs into Songs, to form their Groans into Prayers to him that can supply all they want, out of his infinite Treasures of Grace and Mercy, which are laid up for them; to comfort, establish, strengthen, and settle them, that they may not be overcome, nor mov'd from the Hope of the Gospel.

CHAP.

C H A P. XI.

Free Remission of Sins, and Justification in the Covenant.

IV. **A** Nother Benefit and Blessing of the Covenant, and which is inseparably annex'd to the former, is, that the Lord promiseth to his People the Pardon and Forgiveness of their Sins; as in *Jer. 31. 34. I will forgive their Iniquities, and remember their Sins no more.* So also in *Heb. 8. 12. I will be merciful to their Unrighteousness, and their Sins and their Iniquities will I remember no more.* By these and such Promises the Lord takes away that great Scruple and Fear that might fill the Hearts of his People, as thinking that the Greatness of their Sins would exclude them from ever having any benefit by the former Promise. For if the Soul hearing of such a Promise reveal'd, *I will be your God*, should now reply, and say, "Yes, he will be the God of the Just, as of *Abraham*, and such as have not sinned against him; but I have sinned, and my Transgressions have been exceeding many, and they stand up as a Partition-Wall between God and me: how can he then be a God to me, or communicate himself and his Goodness unto me so vile and sinful a Creature?" Now the Lord in these Promises takes away this Objection, and says, "I know you have sinned, I have seen your Rebellions against me; yet this shall not hinder but yet I will be your God, and whatever Sins you have committed, I will do them away, and put them out of my sight, and I will be your God." And thus the Lord seems to answer his People. They might say, we are unworthy; I know it, saith the Lord, that thou art obstinate, and thy Neck as an Iron Sinew; and thy Brow brass; and yet the Lord saith, *For my Name's sake I will defer my Anger*, and for my Praise will I refrain from thee, that I cut thee not off. As if the Lord should say, "In regard of thy self and thy own Stubbornness, thou deservest to be cut off and left in thy Mi-

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"fery;

"fery; yet for my Praise I will do thee good." *Isa.* 48.

4. 9. The Sins therefore of God's People shall not break off their Interest in God; they may serve to magnify his Grace and Mercy towards them, but shall not lessen nor hinder it. Well then may these Promises be reckon'd among the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, it being here express'd, as before it is imply'd in that great Promise of the Covenant, *I will be your God.* It sounds forth nothing but Grace and Blessing, Grace from God, and Blessing to us; Grace from God according to that, *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. *The Lord gracious and merciful, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin, &c.* So it also imports great Kindness and Blessing to us, as *Psal.* 32. 1. *Blessed is the Man to whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity.* There is Grace and rich Grace in it, as *Eph.* 1. 7. because nothing but Grace and Mercy can forgive. Justice takes vengeance for Sin, and will not spare; but Mercy taketh pity and forgives. We have nothing to satisfy for the least of our Transgressions, and therefore there is the more Grace and Mercy to us in pardoning of them. The Lord doth not pardon Sin, as Men do Offences sometimes, because they know not perhaps how to be aveng'd, and yet carry Rancour and Malice in their Hearts; but God forgives, tho he hath an infinite Power to destroy, and that in a moment: as *Deut.* 32. 35. & *Mat.* 10. 28. he yet chuseth to forgive. Hence in *Exod.* 34. 6, 7. the Lord joins both these together, *strong and gracious.* And that there is infinite Grace shines forth in forgiving of Sin, will more fully appear, if we consider,

1. The Nature of Sin, which has all manner of Evils in it. It is an injurious Provocation of the great God, it provoketh his Jealousy, as when a Wife forsaketh her Husband, and joineth her self to another; such wrong we do by Sin unto God: for in every Sin we commit, there is a turning unto the Creature, and forsaking the Creator. How much Grace then is there in the forgiving of it!

2. Considering against whom our Sins have been committed, not against a Man only like our selves, but against an infinitely great and holy God.

3. Considering to whom Sin is forgiven, to us that were Enemies, on whose account he spar'd not his

Son,

Son, when he came to be a Mediator between God and us.

4. The Quality of the Lord's Forgiveness, both in the Freeness and Fulness of it: *Rom. 3. 24, 25. & Isa. 48. 9.*

11. Papists may talk of their Satisfaction to God for their Sins, but they cloud over the Glory of God's Grace, while they take thus the Glory of God to themselves.

Ha. 43. 25, 26. There is nothing that we can do, but would deserve his Wrath for the Sin that cleaves to it; but it is for his Name's sake, that he bloteth out the Transgressions of his People; and he hath said, he will not give his Glory to another, nor his Praise to graven Images, *Ha. 42. 8.* He doth it freely, and not only so, but he doth it also fully; he puts away all the Sins of his People, both old and new, great and small, both the Guilt and Punishment of them: so that the Sins of God's People are before him as tho they had never been committed; they are blotted out of his Remembrance, it's call'd *casting them behind his back*, *Isa. 38. 17.* and *into the bottom of the Sea*, *Mic. 7. 19.* A covering them, that they cannot appear in his presence, nor be seen of him any more.

And as the Lord shews infinite Grace herein, so infinitely great is the Benefit and Blessing which comes to us thereby: *Blessed is the Man whose Iniquity is forgiven, to whom the Lord will not impute Sin.* If we consider how great an Evil Sin is, the Greatness of this Benefit will more fully appear; the Greatness of the one will set forth the Greatness of the other, and consequently that this is one of the most precious Promises of the Covenant, which is fill'd with the Riches of Divine Grace. Now Sin is the greatest Evil in the World, and that both in it self and to us.

1. In it self, whether we consider it simply in its own nature and being, as was said before; or causally, making evil the Subject it dwells in. In the former respect it is the greatest Evil, because it is contrary to the greatest Good. God is Goodness it self; his Will also is infinitely holy, just, and good. Now nothing is so contrary to God, and to the Goodness of his Holy Will, as Sin is: it crosseth the Holiness of his Will. And as for the other, if we consider Sin causally, what is it which makes the Creature evil, which made the Devil what

116 Free Remission of Sins, and

he is, but Sin? And that which makes other things so evil, must needs it self be much more evil. Take away Sin from the Devils themselves, and they are good. How great Malignity is there then in Sin!

2. Consider Sin as the greatest Evil unto us: which appears,

(1.) Because it is Sin, and Sin only, which excludes us from God, and makes a Separation between God and us. Afflictions cannot do it; God was with *Joseph* in Prison, with *Jeremiah* in the Dungeon, with his People in their greatest Extremities, as we see *Heb. 11*. But Sin is as a Partition-Wall between God and us, *Isa. 59. 1, 2*. It breeds an Alienation and Strangeness, so that we can have no Communion with him. But now by the Forgiveness of Sin this Partition-Wall is broken down, so as we have free Access unto God, may come into his presence, and stand before him, being accepted in his Beloved. By the Forgiveness of Sin, we return again to our former Estate, in which we stood before our Fall, before Sin had broken us off from God, to a State of Reconciliation with him, and have liberty to recover our Communion with him again.

(2.) Sin is that which keeps all other good things from us; *Fer. 5. 25*. God is good and ready to do good, and to communicate his Goodness to all his Creatures; but it's Sin that deprives us of them, and cuts us short. But now when Sin is done away by Forgiveness, then is the former Hindrance remov'd, that which hinder'd the Course of Blessings from coming to us; and we recover now an Interest in all other things, so as all things are ours which are truly good for us.

(3.) It is Sin which brings all Sorrows and Miseries upon us. They spring not out of the dust, nor come by chance, but are the Fruit which grows upon the forbidden Tree of Sin: but when Sin is forgiven, then these things, which are in themselves evil, are turn'd into good unto us. Having our Sins pardon'd, we may rejoice in all Tribulations; when Sin, which is the Sting in every Affliction, is once pull'd out, we may take up that Cross which before we fled from as a Serpent, and put it in our bosom, and not be hurt by it. But,

(4.) Sin unpardon'd turns good things into evil to us: Sin corrupts the good things we enjoy, it turns Blessings

sings into Curses; as the Lord saith, *Mal. 2. 2. I will curse their Blessings.* Health, Estates, Peace, Prosperity, which are Blessings in themselves, become Snarés unto them, to work the ruin of unpardon'd Sinners.

(5.) We may conceive the exceeding Evil that is in Sin, and the great Benefit of Forgiveness, if we look on those that have felt the Sting of Sin in their own Consciences, and felt the Burden of it lying upon them: as *Cam*, and *Judas*, who for Anguish of Conscience on earth, shakes himself into the Gulph of Hell. *The Spirit of a Man will bear his Infirmity*; all outward Sorrows, so long as his Conscience is at peace, free from the Trouble of Sin; but a wounded Spirit, a sin-burden'd Conscience, none can bear. When God is our Enemy, who then, or what can speak any Peace or Comfort to us? *Isa. 57. 21.* But when Sin is pardon'd, and God reconcil'd, the Soul is eased of all that Anguish and Bitterness that before was insupportable. So that the Prophet *David* might well say as he did, *Blessed is the Man whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin is cover'd, to whom the Lord imputeth not Iniquity*; *Psal. 32. 1.* And this great Blessing hath the Lord promis'd in his Covenant; he will forgive the Sin of his People that walk in Covenant with him. Now the Lord will do this,

1. Because Mercy pleaseth him. It is a pleasure and delight to him to shew mercy to his covenanted People; it shall be to him a *Name of Joy and a Praise*, *Jer. 33. 9.*

2. It is according to his glorious Purpose, thus to magnify his Grace towards those that are in Christ, and accepted in him; hence they are call'd *Vessels of Mercy*, *Rom. 9.*

3. The Lord having receiv'd a full Satisfaction to his Justice in Christ, for whatever it could require at the hand of Believers in him, his Mercy may now flow down unto such without any Lett or Impeachment to his Justice.

Nay farther, if the Lord should not forgive the Sins of his People that believe in Christ, his Sufferings should be in vain: God would never have laid our Iniquities upon him, and caus'd him to suffer, the Just for the Unjust, but that he intended to forgive them to us. Why should the Chastisement of our Peace be laid upon him, if we should also suffer for our own Sins?

Lastly, The Lord has not only promis'd Forgiveness, and spoken it with his Mouth, but his Act and Deed gives us assurance, that he will faithfully perform to his People what he has promis'd: his Dealings with us evidently declare his gracious Inclination towards us, and his Readiness to forgive.

(1.) His great Patience in waiting for our Repentance and turning to him; he waits for this end, that he might be gracious, Isa. 30. 18.

(2.) He has proclaim'd his Name for this end, Exod. 34. 6. *That he is gracious and merciful, long-suffering and abundant in Goodness and Truth, forgiving Iniquity, Transgression, and Sin*: that we might take notice of his Graciousness, and be encourag'd to look unto him for Forgiveness. Psal. 130. 4. *There is Forgiveness with thee, that thou mayst be fear'd*. His gracious Invitation also assures us of it, Mat. 11. 28. that if Sin burden us, he will ease us. Yea, he intreats us to accept of Reconciliation, and to be reconcil'd unto God, 2 Cor. 5. 20.

Lastly, His Command to us to forgive one another, is an Argument of it: For herein he shews his Love towards us, that he would not have the Hatred of any Creature lie against us, no not so much as the Displeasure of a weak Man; but would have us enjoy their Love. How much less then will he let his own Wrath lie upon us, which is infinitely more heavy than the Displeasure of all the Creatures in the world? And farther, if he would have us forgive one another, who have so little Love and Compassion in us, how much more will he forgive us, his Compassion being so tender and great towards the Work of his own hands? All that is before mention'd confirms it to us, that he is a God ready to forgive.

Now 1. let us hence see the only way to get free from the Guilt of Sin which lies upon us; not by denying it, or think to escape by hiding our Sins from the eyes of an all-seeing God, either by thinking that he does not know them, or that he will not regard them: but by flying to his Grace and Mercy, to obtain the Pardon and free Forgiveness of them.

2. The Forgiveness of Sin being one of the Blessings of the Covenant, then surely it extends no farther, nor to any other, but such as give up themselves to God, to walk

walk in Covenant with him. Such therefore as walk contrary to the Covenant that is between God and his People, that cast away all Bonds from them, and will walk at liberty after the ways of their own Heart, and will be under no restraint; it's an evident demonstration that their Sins are bound fast upon them, and 'twill be as Fetters and Chains to bind them hand and foot, and cast them into outer darkness. The Bond of the Covenant and the Blessings of the Covenant go together, so as those that will not come under the one, shall never partake of the other.

3. Let us labour to partake of this rich Blessing, to lie no longer under the Guilt of our Sins, as those that say there is no Hope; but let us take encouragement from the Promise, that we may be the Children of the Covenant, to whom the Promise is made. Let us who desire to have God to be our God, who would draw near, and get into Covenant with him; let not the sense of our Sins dismay us, tho we see so many standing up betwixt God and us, and are ready to think it impossible that so holy a God should ever take so sinful a Wretch by the hand, and enter into Covenant with him, to become his God: let such consider this sweet Promise of Grace, *I will be merciful to their Iniquities, and remember their Sins no more.* Let every Soul sue for this Grace and Mercy, and be encourag'd to lay hold on this gracious Promise in the Covenant. And in order hereto,

1. Enter into thy own Heart, and search out all thy Sins, both of Heart and Life, which you are privy to, *Lam. 3. 40.* this is the Lord's own Direction, *Jer. 3. 12, 13.*

2. When you have found out your Sins, go then before the Lord and confess and judg your self before him, as *Ezra 9. 6.* Confess your self worthy to be destroy'd, as the Prodigal, *Luke 15. 21.* *I am no more worthy to be call'd thy Son.*

3. Present before the Lord the Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, bring no Satisfaction of your own, make no mention of your own Righteousness or Good-deserving, but fly only to the bloody Sufferings and Sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, to find Acceptance and Reconciliation thro him: without that Blood there is no Forgiveness to be expected from a God of infinite Purity and Holiness,

4. Come not with an Heart purposing to continue still in thy Sin; but to thy Prayer for pardoning Mercy, join Prayer for a Spirit of Grace and Holiness to make you a new Heart and a new Spirit, that Sin may live in you no more: be willing to bind thy self by Covenant to the Lord, to glorify that Grace shew'd on thee, if he will please to be gracious towards you in taking away your Sin; compare *Hosea* 14. 3. with *ver.* 9. Beg earnestly and plead believingly for the performance of this Legacy of the New Testament, which Grace hath bequeathed unto us: "Lord, here is thy own Covenant and Promise; tho I be worthy to perish, yet he is worthy upon whose account thou hast graciously promis'd it, and in which Promise thou hast caus'd thy Servant to trust." Such importunity the Lord will not take ill; he delights thus to be overcome by the Pleas of his People; and he that has promis'd, and who is infinitely faithful, will also fulfil and take away all thy Iniquity, and receive thee graciously, according to his Covenant with his People, *Hos.* 14. 3.

This is matter of great Comfort to all the Children of God, who do in any faithfulness and truth of Heart endeavour to walk according to the Covenant they have made with him; to all such, this word of Consolation doth belong, that *their Iniquity is pardoned, their Sins are forgiven*, *Psal.* 103. 3. with *ver.* 17, 18. *Shall Man be more just than God?* (says *Eliphaz*.) If we be careful to keep Covenant with him, how much more will the faithful God perform the Promise of his Covenant towards us? nay, tho we were in part unfaithful, yet *cannot he deny himself*.

Quest. How may I know my Sins are forgiven me, and that I am in a justify'd State?

Ans. 1. A plainer Evidence cannot be given than this before-mention'd, *viz.* a careful, conscionable and constant Endeavour to walk as in Covenant with God; *Psal.* 103. 17, 18.

Obj. But I have many Failings in the keeping of my Covenant.

Ans. Yet so long as you do not renounce your Covenant and break the Bond, till you do agree to the loosing the Knot in which you have bound your self, chusing to turn back after your former Liberties; the substance of the Covenant is not yet broken, tho some Article of the

the Covenant may be violated: There are some Trespases against some particular Clauses in Covenants, which tho they be violated, yet the whole Covenant is not forfeited.

2. An affectionate and cordial Love to the Lord Jesus, who hath washed us from our Sins in his Blood, is a sure Sign that our Sins are forgiven us; *Luke 7. 47. 1 Pet. 1. 8.* When we so think of Christ, as that nothing is too much for him, nothing enough, all we do or can do is too little for him, and as nothing to that which our Soul desireth; this Love never goes alone, but is accompanied with this Blessing of Forgiveness. And surely thus it is with those that feel in any measure the Efficacy of Christ's Blood easing their Consciences from the Guilt of Sin; they could be content to wash Christ's Feet, not only with Tears, but to die for love of him *who hath loved them, and given himself for them, to save them from their Sins.*

3. The mortification and dying of Sin in our Hearts, is a Sign that our Sins are forgiven us. When Christ takes away *Jacob's Sins*, he also turns away Ungodliness from *Jacob*, *Rom. 11. 26, 27.* If Sin live in us, and be in dominion over us, the Guilt of it still remains upon us, if it live in us in its full Strength, *Rom. 6. 14.*

4. If we have a tender Heart to mourn over Christ, whom we have pierced; when it melts the Heart to think that that Blood which we have formerly trodden under foot and despised, should yet be sprinkled on us, to wash us from our Sins: this Kindness of Christ towards us makes our Hearts to mourn over him; *Zech. 12. 10.* that *we have pierced him*, and griev'd his Spirit by our Sins.

5. An Heart willing to forgive, and to do good unto those that have done evil against us, *Mat. 6. 14.* when we can not only forbear them, but forgive them, and bear a loving Heart to them that have been unloving towards us. This Disposition of Heart in us springs from a higher Fountain of Grace, which hath been shed down upon us, in forgiving our Sins. When the Heart can reason with its self to suppress revengeful Desires, when stirring in us, and argue, as *Mat. 18. 21, to end.* and *Eph. 4. 32.* The Lord is willing to forgive me my Debts, and ought not I also to forgive my Fellow-Servant that hath offended

offended me? Such a Disposition of Heart is a token of the Forgiveness of our Sins, *Mat. 6. 14*. The Grace that has been shew'd to us, works an answerable Disposition in us, to forgive the Sins of our Brethren.

6. A free and full Confession of Sin. When we deal openly with the Lord, are freely willing to open all our Heart before him, discovering known Sins, secret Sins, the most prevailing, beloved, and inward Corruptions, are willing to take the shame of all to our selves, and still to be vile in our selves, that Mercy might be glorify'd in our Forgiveness; when we can bring out the whole pack, and not keep a Sin back (so far as we know any thing by our selves) but lay all open and naked before him: Such Confession hath a Promise of Forgiveness, *1 Joh. 1. 9*. Of such a one it may be said, *Go in peace, thy Sins are forgiven thee*. If God give us a Heart thus humbly to confess, it's a sign to us that there is in God a Heart mercifully to forgive.

Let all therefore that are sanctify'd, and have tasted this rich Grace in the Forgiveness of their Sins, ascribe Glory to him that hath shew'd this Mercy to them, extolling that Grace that hath forgiven them. This the Lord looks for, and would have his Grace glorify'd by us: *Eph. 1. 6. Mic. 7. 18*.

We should make the Praise of it ring thro' the whole World, it can never be sufficiently glorify'd by those that are thus Partakers of it.

Let this also teach us willingly to be Servants unto this God of all Grace, who dealeth thus mercifully with his People. Let us say as they in the like case, *What have we to do any more with Idols?* *Hos. 14. 5*. with our former Sins? We will serve them no more, we will henceforth serve thee our gracious God, who promiset to heal all our Back-slidings: thine will we be, thee will we serve.

C H A P.

C H A P. XII.

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.

V. A Farther Benefit of the Covenant purchas'd for us by Christ, and wrought in us, is the renewing and sanctifying of our Natures, by the Graces of his Holy Spirit; *Eph. 1. 3.* The Lord having first justify'd us by his Grace in the Forgiveness of our Sins, he then goes on to sanctify us, that we might be an holy People unto him, to serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all our days; *Luke 1. 74, 75.* and that we may be prepar'd and made meet here, to be Partakers of that Inheritance which he has promis'd to his People that are in Covenant with him; whereinto *nothing that defileth, or is unholy, can enter.* When he has made us imputedly righteous, he will have us inherently righteous also. And by the Promise of this Benefit, the Lord answereth another Scruple, which his People might be subject unto. We might think with our selves, this is indeed a great Benefit which the Lord hath promis'd hitherto, namely, to forgive all my Sins; but tho the Lord should perform all this Mercy unto me, forgiving unto me all my former Sins unto this day, yet I have such a vile sinful Nature within me, that if left to my self, I shall return and sin again as wickedly as ever I did before, and shall bring a new Guiltiness upon my self. Hereto the Lord answers; No, it shall not be, I will renew, alter, and change that sinful and wicked Nature that is in you; I will make your Heart a new Heart, so as you shall be enabled to do my Will, and walk in my Ways. I will sanctify you to be an holy People to my self.

This Renovation and Sanctification of our Nature stands first in cleansing away our sinful Corruption, and then in an Infusion and filling us with the Graces of the Holy Spirit. As a Vessel we intend for any honourable use, first we scour and rinse out the Filth that is in it, sweeten it, and make it fit for Service. Satan had defil'd us with his loathsome Filthiness; but so many as the Lord

124 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

Lord sets apart unto himself to be Vessels of Honour, those he cleanseth from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, and seasoneth them with all the sweet and gracious Gifts of his Holy Spirit. And hence we are said to be *made Partakers of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4 and to be *renew'd by the Holy Ghost*, Tit. 3. 5. And we are said to be *created anew in Christ Jesus*, Eph. 2. 10. because as in our first Creation we were created holy and righteous after the Image of God, so now we are renew'd unto the same Image again, by this Work of Renovation and changing our Natures: there is a new Disposition wrought in us, clean contrary to that which was before. Whereas before, the Wisdom of the Flesh and our corrupt Will was quite contrary to, and even enmity against the Law of God, and would not be brought into subjection to it, *Rom. 8. 7.* now we are made to love the Law, and delight in the Commands of it; *Rom. 7. 22.* It is not now any more a Law without us, only to urge and enforce us, but it is a Law within us, written in the Heart, according to that Promise, *Jer. 33. 31. I will write my Laws in their Hearts, and in their inward parts will I put them.* Whereby there is stamp'd upon the Heart an inward Disposition and Inclination of Mind and Will; to do the things which the Law doth command; loving them, and making precious account of them. This Blessing the Lord promisseth in his Covenant, *Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27. I will pour clean Water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your Filthiness, and from all your Idols, will I cleanse you: A new Heart also will I give unto you, and a new Spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony Heart out of your Flesh, and give you a Heart of Flesh: and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments, and do them.*

This new Heart is taken to be the Genus of all other Graces, not physically new, in regard of Substance, but morally only in regard of Qualities. It signifies both another and a more excellent Heart, as *Caleb* had, who follow'd the Lord fully. The Excellencies of it are not natural, but spiritual; fitting them, (1.) For their new and better State. (2.) For their new and better Work. (3.) For their new and better Reward. God intends better things for his People than they can enjoy here, a better

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 145

better Portion and Inheritance, and he prepares them better Hearts, whereby they may be fitted to receive them: he will not put his new Wine into old Bottles.

In sum, it is the Divine Nature that is here promis'd, the Image of God renew'd, the Life of God begotten, Christ form'd in them; an Heart after God's own Heart, containing in it all those Graces of the Spirit, wherein stands their Likeness to God, and their Capacity of serving and enjoying of him.

And whatever may be objected by Satan and our own carnal Hearts against that Encouragement that may be taken from these gracious Promises of the Covenant; as the Strictness and Severities of a Christian Course, the Straitness of the Gate, and Narrowness of the Way leading to this Blessedness that the Children of God are call'd unto, and do enjoy; the Denial of our selves, taking up the Cross, and following Christ; living by Rule, looking to every Step, to every Word and Thought, &c. when we move heavenwards; that if we take but up a Thought, or set a foot forwards toward this new Course of Life, the Stream carries us down; our old Companions, Pleasures, Ease and Liberty, pull us back again; and that our wretched Hearts are ready to betray us to draw back, and will not come on towards it: Why, take encouragement from this gracious Promise of the Covenant. There is not any thing requir'd in a holy Life so irksom and contrary to thee, but such an Heart as this which the Lord has promis'd to give thee, is so fitted and suited to the Work and Duties that he calls us to, that they will become easy and pleasant. Its Pains will be pleasant, and its very Drudgery will become thy great delight: All Wisdom's Ways are Ways of Pleasantness. The Lord will make them so to a renew'd Heart, *Prov. 3. 17. I delight to do thy Will, O God, thy Law is within my Heart*; *Psal. 40. 8. And of the renew'd Soul it's said, Psal. 1. 2. His Delight is in the Law of the Lord.* In the Original it is, *His Will, his Heart is in the Law.* God's Will and his are now the same; and he that delights in God, and in the Law, (as it is his Law) will never grudge to do what it commands. Where it is a pleasure to be commanded, 'tis no pain to obey. When he is bid to pray, to watch, and to walk humbly with his God, and to draw
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126 Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.

nigh to him in any Duty; 'tis work he loves: It is as if you bid the Hungry eat, or the Thirsty to drink, or the Beggar to come for an Alms. When he is bid to deny himself, to crucify the Flesh, it's the same as if you bid him deny his Enemy, and to revenge himself upon him; and such Revenge is sweet. But O how pleasant is it to a Soul that is renew'd and sanctify'd, to be call'd to a Life of Praise! to dwell in God, and to live above in the Light, Love and Joy of the Lord! to be searching, and studying, and looking into, and admiring those everlasting Treasures of spiritual and heavenly Delights, laid up in God! to behold his Face, to live in his Presence, and to dwell in the Light of his Countenance for ever! There is indeed some remaining Difficulty and Irksomeness in the sweetest Works of Religion, so far as the Heart is unrenow'd, and yet carnal; but as much as we have of this new Heart, and are sanctify'd, so much Ease and Pleasure we shall find therein. The Children of God being made sensible of the Dignity of their State, the Spirituality of their Work, and the Glory of their Reward, and a new Frame or Bent of Spirit put into them; they are dispos'd and fitted for their work, and enabled to it. God has promis'd to give his Spirit unto those that he takes to be a People to himself, to bestow this Blessing of Sanctification upon them, and to make them an holy People: *Gal. 3. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 7.* In particular, the Lord has promis'd in this Covenant,

1. An Heart to know him, *Jer. 24. 7.* not only the Nature or Being of God, manifested in all his essential Perfections and glorious Attributes; and in his personal Relations, the Subsistences in the Godhead, wherein his People will find matter of delightful Admiration to all Eternity: but also to know him in Christ, a God in Covenant with his People; yea, the whole Mind and Will of God, all that is reveal'd to us as our Duty or Happiness.

God known in the Heart, is the whole Bible open'd, the Law and Gospel, with all the Duties, Comforts, and Privileges thereof, made manifest; Christ manifested in his Sufferings and Satisfaction, in his Spirit, and in all the Riches of his Glory, with the whole Mystery of Godliness: and all this in such a manner, as was never before

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 157

before conceiv'd or apprehended. The whole Heart is open'd, and Man made known to himself; all the Depths and Deceits of the Heart, all the Faculties and Powers of it, with their Motions and Operations, with the Rectitude or Obliquities of them. Heaven and Hell are more clearly manifested; the Crown and Kingdom, with everlasting Rest, Glory, and Immortality, are hereby brought to light. Hell and Sin also are made known, and the exceeding Evil that is in it; Satan with his Malice and Wiles, and what the impenitent Sinner must for ever feel in the Wrath of God, when it is pour'd out, and how dreadful the Execution of it must needs be: and these things will be then set in a clearer light than ever before they were.

The Soul is hereby made not only to know and apprehend God, and the things of God, otherwise than before it did, *Jer. 9. 24.* but this Knowledge of him farther notes an Approbation of him, and a Liking of those things that are most excellent; *Phil. 1. 9, 10.* And also an Appropriation of him, the knowing of him as a reconcil'd God to us, through Christ, and a Believer's Interest in him as his God and Portion, and in all his Attributes as employ'd for him: this is saving Knowledge.

This Knowledge of God is accompany'd with answerable Affection to him; as *Psal. 9. 10.* *They that know thy Name will put their Trust in thee.* So they that thus know the Lord will love him, fear, and rejoice in him, and will bless his Name. This Knowledge of God hath a transforming Power, *2 Cor. 3. 18.* It is Christ form'd upon the Heart, it comprehends in it and animates every Grace and Duty. Where God is savingly known in the Soul, he is united to it; old things pass away, and all things are become new in it. The Lord gives us this Knowledge as the Eye of our Souls, and by that Eye he enters with all his Power and Glory: and according to the Manifestation of God in us, so far forth does Sin necessarily vanish; *Eph. 3. 19.* Thou that complaineest of and bewailest thy Ignorance, and fearest that thou knowest not God, look upwards where his Glory dwells, lift up thy Eyes and see; or if thou canst not see, lift up thy Heart for Eyes; beg of him that they may be open'd, that thy Tongue may be also loosed, to speak forth his Praise. Such a Knowledge of God hath also

128 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

a fructifying Power, *Col. 1. 9, 10.* This Sunshine makes a fruitful Soil; the Soul being fill'd with saving spiritual Light, it is full of Love, Faith, Patience, Humility, and fruitful in every good Work, *Mat. 12. 35.* & *1 John 2. 3.* When God shines into the Heart, the Soul is fill'd with *all the Fulness of God.*

2. A single Heart; *Ezek. 11. 19. I will give them one Heart.* This is graciously promis'd in the Covenant, as oppos'd to a double Heart, a wavering and divided Heart.

(1.) To a double Heart, or a hypocritical Heart, properly so call'd; *Psal. 12. 2, 3.* A Heart and a Heart, a Heart in the Breast, and another in the Tongue: but a single Heart is a plain Heart.

(2.) To a wavering or unstable Heart; *Jam. 1. 6, 8.* Wavering-minded Men have almost as many Hearts as they live days, or meet with cases. A Heart that changes with the Weather, and tacks about with every Wind, this may be call'd either many Hearts, or rather no Heart at all; but Grace fixes and establishes it, brings it to a Consistency in it self, which before was any thing or nothing.

(3.) It's oppos'd to a divided Heart, *Hos. 10. 2.* cut in two, as it were. God hath a Corner in it, but the rest is for Sin and Satan; one half for Christ, and the other half for this present World: But this single Heart is an intire Heart, one Heart; all the Powers of it are united within it self, and go the same way: God hath the whole Heart, *Psal. 103. 1.* all its Springs are in him, and thither do all its Streams bend their Course. A single Heart hath a single Eye, *Mat. 6. 22.* it fixeth on God as its End, and there it wholly bestows it self. *I am thine, Psal. 119.* and there only it takes up its rest. *Psal. 39. 7. And now, Lord, what wait I for? my Hope is in thee.* God is both its Work and its Wages, looking upon him as its exceeding great Reward. To please God, this is its whole business; and to enjoy God, this is its Happiness: this is the Mark it has in its eye, the Scope of all its Motions; it wills, loves, desires, designs, hopes, and labours for this, that the Lord may possess and be the possession of it; and makes all things else not only to stoop and stand by, but to serve Him. God is its first and last, it looks no farther; *Psal. 73. 25. Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none in Earth that I desire*

CHAPTER II. Of the Enjoynment of the Heart to God.
 The Lord God has set God upon the Throne in his Heart; the Soules in things else are servants to his Footstool: It is not Man's touching, but God's touching the Heart, that draws it heavenward; and when he touches, the Heart will follow, as the Needle which touch'd with the Loadstone runneth after it. *Examp. p. 10*
 To Others that have many Hearts have many Affectu-
 every Heart has its peculiar Idols, Pleasures, Promises, Pro-
 hours, &c. and these are their Ends; and every End is
 a Loadstone, to draw the Heart after it: Every Heart
 will go after its God, the God it has chosen; but a
 Christian, that hath but one Heart, hath but one God,
 by whom he will be drawn, directed, guided, and go-
 vern'd. His Desires are after him, his Delight is in him:
This one thing I do, Phil. 3. 13. How many things soever
 his Mind intendeth to do, he intends God in them; this
 single Heart is making still towards him in all he does,
 as his Mark and Prize. *Phil. 1. 21. & Chap. 3. 13, 14. The*
one thing I do; forgetting the things that are behind, and
reaching forth unto those things that are before; I press
onward unto the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of
God in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 He pursues this End really and heartily, he makes
 straight Steps to his feet, he has but one way, and looks
 straight on toward this Mark which he has set before him:
 his All is in God, who is an all-sufficient Portion; and
 the only satisfying Portion of the Soul. And such a
 Heart the Lord hath graciously promis'd in this Covenant
 to put into his People. *Jer. 31. 9. I will be a Father to the*
fatherless, and a Husband to the widow, saith the Lord.
 3. An Heart of Flesh: *Ezek. 36. 26. I will take away*
the stony Heart out of your Flesh, and I will give you an
Heart of Flesh. The old Heart is fitly resembled to a
 Stone in several respects; its natural Coldness, Deadness,
 and Hardness may be very fitly compar'd to it: but
 this the Lord has also promis'd to take away from his
 People that are in Covenant with him; and that he will
 give them a Heart of Flesh, a soft and tender Heart. As
 our Flesh can easily feel, and be sensible of what is con-
 trary to it and puts it to pain; so a soft Heart is made
 sensible of Sin, and cannot meddle with *that*, but it
 quickly smarts for it; and what it cannot bear, it will

130. *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

be more watchful to avoid. A soft Heart will mourn, and melt, and grieve, when hard Hearts will melt at nothing; it's apt to receive Impressions. A soft Heart will stand in awe of the Power of God, and be afraid of his Justice; his Mercy will melt it, his Holiness humble it, and leave the Stamp and Image thereof upon it. His Word and Works will affect it, while neither his Word nor Rod, neither his Speaking nor Smiting, will make any impression upon the other. 'Tis the Heart of Flesh that hears and yields; and such a Heart the Lord hath promis'd in his Covenant. He will no more write his Law on Tables of Stone; he'll write in Flesh, where the Impression will take, and go deeper: and therefore wherever his Law is written in the Heart, he first prepares it; he makes this Stone Flesh, and then engrave upon it. Particularly, there is in such a Heart a Tenderness.

1. Of Sin. When under a Temptation, or when it feels the first Motion to it, a tender Heart is startled at it; as Joseph, Gen. 39. 9. *How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?* So David, *The Lord forbid I should stretch forth my Hand against the Lord's Anointed*, 1 Sam. 26. 11. And that not only at great Sins, but the least and smallest also: Whether little or great, the Language of such a Heart is, 'tis a Sin, and that's enough.

2. After the Commission. The Skirt of Soul's Garment was too heavy for David's Heart to bear, his Heart smote him presently, 1 Sam. 24. 5. Sin in the Review has a dismal aspect; its pleasant Flowers quickly turn to Thorns in such a Heart, and sometimes end in Tears; as Peter's, *When he thought thereon, he wept*. At least it warns and makes more watchful after.

3. Of Duty. A tender Heart dares not neglect any known Duty; it's loth to grieve or offend the Lord, and makes him very solicitous to serve and please him. It makes watchful against Sin, and unto Duty; and that not only as to the Matter, but also the Manner of it; both the Substance and Circumstance, all must be right, or it is not at ease. It would neither leave undone, nor do amiss; any Failing, not only in the Matter, but in the Principle, End, Affection, or Intention, is a burden to it.

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings 121

4. In respect of Suffering, a tender Heart will neither sinfully shun the Cross, nor run unwarrantably upon it. It's patient under the hand of the Lord, tho' not insensible; it can be touch'd with it, tho' not offended at it. A tender Heart will mourn also over the Afflictions of others; *Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I hurt not?* He espouses all the Sufferings of Christ in his Members as his own; in all their Afflictions, he is afflicted.

Where there is a tender Heart, there is a tender Conscience, which can discern between Good and Evil. There is a Tenderness that proceeds from Cloudiness; a Scrupulosity that fears every thing, that makes Sins that are not, that stumbles at straws, and starts at shadows, that dare not (by doing its Duty) please God, for fear of offending him; but this is the Sickness or Soreness of Conscience, not its Soundness. But it's the sound Conscience that's well inform'd and understands the Rule, that's truly tender; *Heb. 5. 14.*

It's quick and watchful, can espy the least Sins and smallest Duties; it can see Sin in the very Temptation, the least Sin under the fairest Appearances, so as to avoid it, and the least Duty under the greatest Reproaches and Discountenance, to perform it. O what a Croud of Evils do thrust into a loose and careless Heart, with which Satan himself crowds in and is undiscover'd! which had it been wakeful and watchful, might have been prevented. But a truly tender Conscience has its eyes open, to discover and discern all that comes: its very Thoughts are under examination, before there is a free Admission.

There is also a Tenderness of the Will, that stands in its Flexibleness and Pliableness to the Will of God, wherein chiefly stands the Blessing of a soft Heart. A hard Heart is stubborn and obstinate, his Neck is an Iron Sinew; where the Heart is unrenew'd, there is no bending or turning it out of its course: *We will do whatever proceeds out of our mouth, Jer. 44. 17. Who is Lord over us? Psal. 12. 4.* is the Language of such a Heart. Whatever Scripture and Conscience speak, there is no prevailing: but when the Iron Sinew is broken, when the Rebellion and Stubbornness of the Spirit is subdued and tamed, made gentle and pliable, then it becomes a tender Heart. When the Will is once broken

132 Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.

ken loose from Sin, when it will be content to let all go, and give up it self to the Dominion of the Lord. "What God will have me be and do, that I will be and do: I am not my own, but thine; do with thy own demand of thy own whatever thou pleasest; no longer what I will, but the Will of the Lord be done." When it comes to this, there is a tender Heart, the Blessing of a broken Spirit, the stony Heart is then taken away, and there is now a Heart of Flesh.

There may be Tears, Terrors, Trouble of Conscience; there may be passionate Workings and Meltings felt upon our Spirits; which, tho' desirable, and there is something in them, yet these are not to be trusted to, they are not the things we are to look at; but a subdu'd, tractable, willing, obedient Heart, that is, a tender Heart. *Ha. 1, 19, 20. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the Good of the Land; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be destroy'd, &c.* Such a Heart will be especially tender,

(1.) Of God's Dishonour.

(2.) Of his Displeasure.

(1.) He loves and honours God, and is desirous he should be lov'd and honour'd of all; he fears, and would that the whole World should fear him. He would receive in his own Breast every Arrow that is shot against him: he is willing to suffer and die, and be nothing, rather than God should not be All in All: he is tender of his Holiness, and cannot bear any thing that would eclipse it, or to see him wrong'd in any of his Attributes; the Sins of Men, which darken and would rob him of the Glory of them, are the Grief and Burden of such a Heart: *The Reproaches of them that reproach'd thee, are fallen upon me: Psal. 69. 9.*

(2.) It is tender of his Displeasure. It is patient under the Displeasure of Men, it can bear and yet rejoice in the Wrath and Rage of Satan it bears, and triumphs over; and tho' all the World be displeas'd and provok'd, so God smiles, 'tis well enough. *Lord, lift thou up the Light of thy Countenance upon me, and my Heart is glad: Psal. 4. 6. Thou didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled: Psal. 30. 7.* But it's jealous of whatever may be grievous or offensive to the Lord, or that may by any means draw or steal away his Heart and his Affections from him: this is a soft and tender Heart.

4. An Heart to love the Lord : Deut. 30. 6. *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy Heart, and the Heart of thy Seed, so love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul.* Love is the Soul of the new Creature, the Closure of the Soul with God. He that hath most of God, is most a Christian ; and he that hath most of Love, hath most of God : *God is Love*, 1 John 4. 16. And this Grace of Love the Lord hath promis'd in this Covenant. We cannot bestow our Love upon any other Object comparably unto him, who is infinitely excellent, and so most worthy of all Love ; and he has made this therefore the Duty of all his understanding Creatures, to love him with all their Hearts, and Soul, and Strength ; and it is our greatest privilege and advantage thus to love him. He is essentially good, Goodness in the abstract, he is all Perfection. As he is in this one Attribute, he is the same in all his other Attributes ; each one is infinite, and infinite Perfection is essentially all Perfection. God is originally good, the Fountain and Pattern of all that Good, whatsoever it is, that is in the Creatures : he is bountiful and gracious, and ready to bestow all that is truly good upon them, and he is the felicitating End and Blessedness of the Soul. His Bounty, Mercy, Compassion, Patience, Love, All-sufficiency towards his Creatures, according to their various Cases and Necessities, all these are in one word his Goodness ; and Goodness calls for Love : the greatest Goodness calls for and deserves the greatest Love ; and this excellent Grace is promis'd in the Covenant.

Now the Object of this Love is,

(1.) God in himself, who being infinitely excellent, is to be loved in himself, and for himself.

(2.) God in Christ ; in whom alone, considering us as Sinners, he can communicate himself and his Goodness to us. God cannot immediately be seen by us, but Christ is the Glass in which this Glory may be seen : 2 Cor. 4. 6. *No Man hath seen God at any time, but the only-begotten Son, who lies in the Bosom of the Father, he hath reveal'd him ;* Joh. 1. 18. God in himself consider'd by us as rational Creatures, and in our state of Innocency, is both a sufficient and futable Good ; but God in Christ only can be so to us, consider'd as lapsed Creatures, and in a state of Sin. In Christ he is a God of Pity

134 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

Pity and Compassion to us, a God of Patience and Mercy, with whom there is plenteous Redemption; loving and pitying us, pardoning us, washing and saving us from our Sins, and from the Wrath to come: and such Love as this, is that which kindles Love; that which Breaks forth out of a Cloud of Fury and Displeasure; abus'd, provok'd, and yet forgiving Love: to whom much is forgiven, they will love much.

Farther, our Love to God is heightned from our due Self-Love. There is a sinful Self-Love, when either we love that for self which is not our self; when we love our Flesh and fleshly Interest, or when we love our selves inordinately more than God, and God only for our selves. And there is a lawful Self-love, when we love our selves in the Lord, and for the Lord: and the more we thus love our selves, the more is the Lord loved by us; and the more he is our own, the more Love he hath. Now in Christ the Lord is our God: *Psal. 67. 6. & Isa. 25. 1. Thou art my God, and I will exalt thee. I will praise thy Name, &c.*

We ought to love him for his own Excellency, as he is God, and also as he is so good, gracious, and merciful to his Creatures, whether he be ours or no: But when both meet together, that he is God and our God, Good and our Good, gracious, merciful, all-sufficient, and all this to us; hence is our Love made perfect in us. And then he is a present Good: in Christ we have not only a Propriety in him, but a present Possession; *He that hath the Son, hath the Father also.* We see his Light, we feel his Love, we taste his Goodness, and enjoy his Presence; we have God with us, in him: he dwelleth in his People that are in Covenant, and they in him; and hence we love, and herein rejoice. And then

In all the things of God we see him, love him, and rejoice in him; in his Word, Ordinances, Sabbaths, his People, Graces, Duties, in all his Ways: it's God in all these that his People love, his Ways and Works, and all his Dispensations; they see God in every thing, and they love God wherever they see him. Their Love to the things of God, is their Love to God, for it is God in them that they love. Their Love to them is founded either upon their Participation of him, or their Relation to him; either as they come from him, and are there-

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 135.

therefore divine and heavenly: *He that loveth him that begat, loveth those that are begotten of him.* And whatever proceedeth from him, whatever bears his Image, and has any relation to him, they love it for his sake. His Grace, that appears in his People, his holy Truths in his Word, are the very Face of Christ, who is full of Grace and Truth, and therefore they love them. It's their Duty and Delight to be ascending heavenwards; they are dead with Christ, risen with Christ, and 'tis not with them as they would, but when they are ascending up with him. They are dead with him by Repentance and Humiliation, they are risen with him by Faith and Sanctification, and they ascend with him by Love and holy Affection. The Ordinances of God are our *Jacob's Ladder*, reaching from Heaven to Earth, by which Angels descend and Souls ascend; God comes down to his People, and their Hearts go up to him by them.

Then if we consider the Act of Love, it is a natural Affection. The Love of God is the Soul's clasping or closing with the Lord: it is the opening or going out of the Heart, in its strength, after God, and the uniting or knitting of the Soul to God, with a Complacency and Acquiescence in him.

(1.) The Strength of the Heart making out after God, the Love of Desire, the breathing, thirsting, or panting of the Heart after God; *Psal. 42. 1.* The Heart's working God-ward with all its might, loving him above all things, with the greatest vigour and intention, and as its compleat and adequate Object; God is its All: *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee; Psal. 73. 25.*

(2.) The uniting of the Soul with God, our cleaving to him; *Acts 11. 23.* It is the knitting of the Soul with God, as *Jonathan's* was with *David's*, *1 Sam. 18. 1.* and *Jacob's* to *Benjamin*. It is the Soul's willing of God to it self, and willing it self and all to God; Let me be thine, intirely so, with all that I have and am: Let every Knee bow to him, and let every Heart and every Creature be to his praise. *Let the Lord live, and blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my Salvation be exalted; Psal. 18. 46.*

(3.) The Soul's taking pleasure, and taking up its rest in him. Where we love, there will be a delightful Stay

136 Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.

or Immoration of the Mind upon God *in anima est ubi amat*: we are often looking where we love. When I awake, I am still with thee. There is also an Acquiescence of the Heart in him; *Return unto thy Rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with me. I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.* When the Soul feels it self to love and to be beloved, to have what it loves; when it comes to this, it's satisfy'd, and has enough. And here is the Sweetness of Religion, the Pleasure and Delight of mutual Love between God and the Soul. 'Tis Love that is the Pleasure of our Lives; this is that makes Heaven so sweet; there we shall have our fill of Joy, because there we shall have our fill of Love. God himself could not be the Joy, if he were not the Love of his People. When the Love of Sin puts such a Sweetness into it, that even Death and Hell will down with carnal Hearts for its sake; O what a Feast will Love make of Holiness and Glory! Get Love to Christ, and to Religion, and you will never ask where is the Blessedness and Sweetness of it. Love will make all the Exercises of Religion sweet, the Duties of it sweet and easy, ay and the Suffering also that may attend it: *O that my Ways were directed, that I might keep thy Statutes!* Hence Love is said to be the fulfilling of the Law. It would walk worthy of the Lord into all pleasing; being fruitful in every good work. It is the Spring that sets all our Wheels a going, the Womb in which all our Works are form'd. Its Receipts and Returns are a pleasure to it: Any thing that comes down from Heaven, and every Present it has to send thither, is a Joy to Love. This is the Message that both speak, Happy Soul! thou lovest, and art beloved. This is to a Saint what Malice is to Satan, that which gives force to all his Actings: a Heart inflam'd with Love, will set the hand a working, and the feet a running. And this is that sweet and excellent Grace of Love that is promis'd in this Covenant of Grace.

15. An Heart to fear the Lord. This is promis'd, *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*

The Lord is dreadful in the Excellency and Glory of his Majesty: his Power is dreadful, yea, his Holiness, Truth, Righteousness, and all his Name; *Jer. 5. 22.*

Fear

Sanctification with all Spiritual Blessings. 837

Fear ye not me, saith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my Presence, which have placed the Sand for the Bound of the Sea, by a perpetual Decree that it cannot pass it? and tho the Waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail; tho they roar, yet can they not pass over it. He that did this, what can he not do? So Jer. 10. 10. At his Wrath the Earth shall tremble, and the Nations shall not be able to abide his Indignation. Deut. 28. 58. That thou mayst fear this glorious Name.

Now the Lord hath put the Dread of himself upon the Hearts of all the Earth; not the best only, but the worst of the Sons of Men. And it proceeds,

(1.) From the Impress of God upon the Natures of all Men: He has his Witness in their own Consciences, which they can never confute; they that will not see, shall (whether they will or no) feel that there is a God.

(2.) It's increas'd by the Greatness of his Works, and Wonders that he doth in the World. And it's heightned,

(3.) By his Judgments which he executeth in the Earth; By these he revealeth himself from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men.

(4.) By their Conscience of Guilt, and their binding over to the Judgment to come, Rom. 2. 15.

Yet by Sin the Heart of Man is much harden'd from the Fear of the Lord. Sin blinds the Eye and hardens the Heart, brings into danger, and puts out of fear: Who is in such danger, and yet who so bold as the blind Sinner? When the Understanding is darkned, the next word we read is, *past feeling*; Eph. 4. 19. There is included in the very nature of Sin, a slighting of God; and by once slighting we learn to slight him more: and when Sin hath thus harden'd, God will also harden; lets the Sinner alone, often smites him with judicial Blindness, and gives him up to a *reprobate Mind*, Rom. 1. 28, 29. & Eph. 4. 19. to commit all Uncleaness with greediness: and hereby runs headlong to his own destruction. Where the Fear of God is not in any, there dwells Sin, Satan, and all manner of Wickedness.

But now tho this is the Condition of every Person whilst in their natural and unrenew'd Estate; Rom. 3. & Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. yet God will recover his Honour in the Hearts

from a inward bond and chain which will bind them to

138 Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.

Hearts of his People that are in Covenant with him; he will put his Fear in their Hearts.

The Fear of the Lord is taken sometimes more largely, comprehending all Religion; as *Job* 1. 1.

Sometimes more strictly, as a distinct Grace of the Spirit of God, which the Lord has promis'd to put into his People's Hearts: which includeth a Reverence of God, an abiding Awe of him upon the Heart, to be under a Sense of his Majesty and Glory, shining forth in all his Attributes, especially in his Holiness and Omniscience. The Glory of his infinite Purity and Holiness, and the Sense of such an holy Eye upon the Soul, strikes it with Dread and Consternation. This is express'd by sanctifying the Lord in the Heart, *Lev.* 10. 3. & *Isa.* 8. 13. *Sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself, and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread.* As God justifieth and sanctifieth his People, so they are to justify and sanctify him. Now to justify God, supposeth there is a sinful judging, and foolish charging of God in the Hearts of Men; and it is our vindicating of him from such Charges, his Righteousness, Goodness, Truth, &c. To sanctify God, is especially to reverence him in the Heart, to have such an high, holy, and honourable Esteem of him, as commands an Awe upon the Heart: And that,

At all times; *My Son, be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the day long*; *Prov.* 23. 17. Let it be habitually there, and also actuate and stir up this holy Fear, keep up an holy Awe, a deep Sense of God always upon thee: where-ever thou art, with whomsoever thou hast to do, remember his Presence, and let his Eye that is always upon thee strike an Awe upon thy Spirit. *So speak and so do, as those that shall be judged*, *1 Jam.* 2. 12. *Remember the Judge stands at the door*, *Chap.* 5. 9.

This abiding Reverence of God, what an influence would it have upon our whole Course? We shall then serve the Lord acceptably, when it is with this Reverence and Godly Fear; we shall then watch unto every Duty, and against every Sin, serve him universally in every thing, and walk before him steddily, holding on in an even Course. While slight and frothy Spirits are tossed up and down, and are always wandering, and are contradictory to themselves; the Fear and Awe of God upon them, would fix them, and hold them in a more even

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 119

even and equal poise. So much of the Reverence, so much of the Holiness of God will be upon us. So that the Presence of a Christian walking in the Fear of the Lord, oftentimes begets an Awe and Reverence of him in the Hearts of the worst of Sinners: their Countenances are a Rebuke, and all their Ways are a Conviction to them.

Especially in our drawing nigh to God, we should have an Awe of his Majesty upon us: *Psal. 89. 7. God is greatly to be fear'd in the Assembly of the Saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. I will be sanctify'd in them that draw nigh unto me.* In hearing his Word, he sees the Holiness and Authority of God stamp'd upon it, and takes every word as coming from his mouth. He fears also when he comes to worship God, he reverences his Sanctuary; *In thy Fear will I worship, Psal. 5. 7.* He looks upon the Duties and Ordinances of Worship as the Institutions of God, which bear his Image and Superscription, where he hath appointed him to wait for him, and to meet him in: *Gen. 28. 17.* He sets himself then as before the Lord of the whole Earth, to do homage to him, to behold his Goings in his Sanctuary, and to beg Life at his hands.

This Fear of God includeth also an Abhorrence of Evil for his sake.

(1.) As it is against God, and a Wrong to him.

(2.) As it is against his own Soul.

(1.) Sin is the greatest Injury and Wrong to God; it is the turning of the Heart from him, which is the great thing God respects and requires as his own: *My Son, give me thy Heart, Prov. 23. 26. Keep it with all Diligence, Chap. 4. 23.* Keep it safely for me, keep it clean, see that it be not defild nor carry'd away. When the Heart's gone, all is gone with it; where we bestow our Hearts, we bestow all that we have. Now Sin is the turning away of the Heart; this is the very Nature of Sin, *the Heart's departing from the living God, Heb. 3. 12.* There is but one thing in the World that God more especially respects, and this Sin steals away.

Sin is the Insurrection and Rebellion of the Heart against God; it turns from him, and turns against him; it runs over to the Camp of the Enemy, and there takes up Arms against God. A sinful Heart would set
up

249 *Sanctification with all Spiritual Blessings*

up it self in God's Throne, it would be King in his stead, and have the command of all: Sinners would be their own Gods: *Our Tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* This is the Language and Nature of Sin: It is a fighting against God, and would spoil him of all the Jewels of his Crown. It charges the Lord with Folly, and makes Men pretend to know better how to chuse for themselves, and how to order themselves to their own advantage, better than God. All our Quarrellings at Providence, all our Murmurings and Discontents at our Lot, are our Hearts charging the Lord with Folly. It disgraces the Throne of his Glory, and lays his Honour in the Dust, while it sets the Almighty below the lowest of his Creatures. Thus Sin is the greatest Wrong to God, and herein,

(2.) It is the greatest Wrong to our own Souls. Prov. 8. 36. *He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own Soul; and they that hate me, love Death.* The Loss of God is more our own Loss than his: Our Sin may be a total and eternal Loss of God, for ought we know (if we are without assurance of Interest in him) and this is Hell, the Loss of God, and the eternal Loss and Ruin of our Souls. A Christian cannot live comfortably a day without him; and how miserable then must be the Condition of those that shall be for ever separated from his Presence! But now the Fear of God, which keeps us close to him, is the blessed means of his appointment to secure our Interest in him, in his Love and Favour. Sin and Death, Sin and Hell are link'd together: but in his favour is Life. What inexpressible Folly and Madness then must it needs be, to venture on in the ways of Sin, whatever we were to suffer here by our avoiding of it? And that we may not, the Lord has promis'd in his Covenant to put his Fear into our Hearts, that we may not sin against him.

6. Obedience: an obedient Heart. This the Lord has promis'd in this Covenant; Ezek. 36. 27. *I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgments and do them.* Obedience is either of Heart or Life; and here the Lord undertakes for both, to give an obedient Heart, *I will put my Spirit in your Hearts*: for where the Spirit dwells, he rules. And those two Promises, *I will put my Spirit in your Hearts,*

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 141

Hearts, and I will write my Law in your Hearts, signify the same thing. The Law in the Heart is the Will of Man melted into the Will of God.

The Obedience of the Heart includes in it,

(1.) The opening of the Heart to the Word of God.

(2.) The Resolution of the Heart for the Work of the Lord.

(1.) The opening the Heart to his Word: *What wilt thou have me to do?* is the Voice of an obedient Heart. Speak, Lord, command what thou pleasest, and thy Servant will yield a ready Obedience. When the Word and Will of the Lord is receiv'd with Authority, and suffer'd to rule in the Soul; when the Heart gives up it self unto it, then it is accepted: there's its hearkening to it. It includes,

(2.) The Resolution of the Heart for the Work of the Lord: Psal. 119. 106. *I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* Whatsoever the Lord shall speak, we will do; that's the obedient Heart. And where the Heart is thus resolv'd to obey, this is that Obedience which shall be accepted unto Salvation. Where this Resolution is, as there is opportunity there will be Practice; and where there's no opportunity, in God's account this is so. Every Duty is contain'd in it: an Heart to obey, is our obeying; an Heart to do, is our doing; an Heart to suffer, in God's account is our suffering in his Name.

But here it must be carefully noted, that tho sincere Resolution for Obedience, is Obedience, yet every Resolution is not that Resolution. Resolution for Obedience is then sincere, when,

1. It flows from an inward and rooted Inclination: Psal. 119. 112. *I have inclin'd my Heart to perform thy Statutes always unto the end.* It proceeds from a new Nature; it is not produc'd by some sudden Fright or Sense of Danger, or merely by a present Force of Argument; but by a Divine Power working the Heart to a Surableness to the Will and Ways of God, and an habitual Propension and Inclination thereto. The Heart is the Root of Action, and Grace is the Life of the Root. Resolution for Holiness without an holy Inclination, is a Blade without a Root.

142 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

2. A sincere Resolution is bottom'd on a firm Assent to the Truth of Scripture Revelation. A Christian resolves to be found walking in all the ways of God, because he believes; he believes God, that he is as he hath said, the Rewarder of them that diligently seek him. As his Hopes, so his Purposes, are built upon the Foundation of the Scriptures, on which they stand; and whatever Resolution has not this Foundation, is but an House upon the Sands.

3. A sincere Resolution is founded on the highest Reason; and how great Reason soever there is for a Religious Course, yet if it be not understood or consider'd, our Resolution will be alike unstable, as if there was no Reason at all. Now,

The Reasons we have for our following and serving God, are the highest of all Reasons, whether we respect it as our Duty or Happiness. For,

(1.) There is none can lay such Claim to us as God, whose we are, who has made us, and bought us; *Psalm 135. 2, 3. Serve the Lord with gladness, for the Lord be-
- God: It is he that hath made us, and not we our selves;
- we are his People, and the Sheep of his Pasture. Ye are not
- your own, for ye are bought with a Price; therefore glorify
- God in your Body and in your Spirits, which are God's;
- 1 Cor. 6. 20. And as there is none can lay so good a
- Claim to us, so there is none besides him that can so
- justly require our Service.*

(2.) There is none can be better to us than God; as none can require, so none can reward our Obedience like him: and if any thing in the World (upon what account soever) be thought better than the Lord, that's set up by us for a God in his room. To chuse the Service of Sin and the World before God, is perfect folly; and such a Fool says in his Heart, *there is no God.*

(3.) God is the Rewarder both of the Evil and the Good: if we serve the Lord, he will be our exceeding great Reward; in whose Presence is Fulness of Joy, and Rivers of Pleasure are at his right Hand, and will be the Portion of such for ever: and if we serve him not, what is the Reward we can expect? *Those mine Enemies
- that would not that I should reign over them, bring them
- hither and slay them before me; that's their Reward. Sin
- has its Rewards, but what are they but Vanity and
- Vexation?*

Veration? Or, if they were better, how long will they last? When Sin has paid the most it can, O what a Reward is there behind, from God! *This shall you have of my Hand, you shall lie down in Sleep,* Isa. 50. 11.

(4.) The Wages which God will give, will certainly be blessed or dreadful, according to our Obedience or Disobedience: his Reward is an eternal Reward, eternal Salvation to them that obey him; and everlasting Destruction to them that serve him not.

I have a Soul, this Carcase is the least part of me; a few Years is the most I have to spend in this World, and how inconsiderable is it, whether I have little or more in it, better or worse? In a short time that will come all to one: But O my Eternity! what is that like to be? Why, 'tis God that must determine that, and he will certainly reward every Man according to his Works; Rom. 2. 10, 11. *Who will render to every Man according to his Deeds, &c.* There's Glory and Shame, Life and Death set before me; eternal Happiness, or eternal Misery, one of the two must be my Lot; and this is if that must determine which; if I be sincere in my Obedience, I live; if I disobey, I die for ever. Now, when our Resolution is founded on such Reasons as these, than which none can be imagin'd higher and more weighty (still Eternity become of less regard than Time, and an immortal Soul be set below a perishing Body) this Resolution is like to stand.

When the Question being put, Shall I follow God or not? God or the World? shall I follow God or my Lusts? When this is the Answer the Soul gives; Why, there's none can lay such Claim to me as God, there's none can be as good to me as God; whomsoever I serve, it's God must be my Rewarder; my everlasting Blessedness or eternal Ruin depends on him, and must be infallibly determined, according to my Obedience or Disobedience to him: this is the plain Case, obey and live, obey or die for ever; therefore what can I say less or more, but that I am the Lord's, and will be his Servant? Let others chuse whom they will serve; as for me, O my Soul! serve thou the Lord. This is like to be an abiding Resolution.

304. This sincere Resolution is the Fruit of mature Deliberation: Deliberation gives Reason its full weight, and makes

444 Sanctification, with all spiritual Blessings.

makes the strength of it appear; it lays all things in the ballance, it's the comparing of Reasons for and against a thing, the weighing of Arguments and Objections, Encouragements and Discouragements, casting the Coin as well as the Gain particularly: and this is that which our blessed Saviour, the Fountain of all Wisdom, has directed us to do, and all that would be his Disciples. We must consider therefore what there is farther contained in this Obedience; and that is,

1. Subjection. Servants must not be at their own Wills, but at the Will of another: the Heart of Man naturally affects Dominion; that's the great Controversy of Sinners with God, *Who shall be Lord?* Jer. 17. 31. Obedience yields that God shall be so; yea, and all others also whom he has put us under Subjection to, not to serve their Lusts, but we must be subject to their righteous Laws and Commands. God must be obey'd; and Magistrates, Ministers, Masters, Parents, must be obey'd in the Lord, and for the Lord. To stoop to the lowest Offices, even to the washing of the Feet of the least Disciple; we must not dispute whether it is fit or safe to be done, or what reason there is for it, if God commands it: it's reason enough that God will have it so, God's Will is ever the highest and clearest Reason.

2. That we be active and industrious therein: they whom the Lord sends into his Vineyard, must be active and industrious; they are sent to work, and not to sleep. The Life of a Christian is laborious, he must be ever about his Master's Business.

There is a natural Activity, arising from an innate Vigour and Vivacity of some Mens Spirits (which requires sometimes more Industry to regulate and restrain, than to put forth into Act) and that which is gracious, which is either when this is manag'd and improv'd for God, and turn'd into the right Channel; or else a naturally unactive Spirit, rais'd and quicken'd by Grace and religious Industry. This holy Activity is the Extract of the Spirits, and Life of all our Parts and Graces; and 'twill go farther, and do more honour and abundant service to God, and his Gospel, than is done by a thousand others. We may best understand the value we put on things, by the Pains and Cost we are content to be at to purchase them. When Sinners bestow themselves upon

upon the World, are so constantly and unweariedly industrious in the pursuance of it, when their Time, Strength, and Hopes are laid out for the procuring of it; it's evident enough what rate they put upon it, and that it has the highest room in their Hearts, when they will venture so deeply for it.

So on the other side, when little is done for God, when any thing must suffice to be spent on the Soul or Eternity, what cheap things do they count them! Whatever they pretend, while they are cold and indifferent in seeking after God, spiritless in their Inquiries after him, and in their Motions towards him, ready to take up any Excuse instead of performing faithfully their Duty to him, and in obeying what he has commanded them; how clear an Evidence is this of their slighting of him! and such must expect to be reckon'd with as slothful Servants.

But now an industrious Christian puts a great Price upon God and his Service; this is written upon all his Labours, [*He is worthy for whom I do all this.*] And tho sometimes the most humble, watchful, laborious Christians complain of their want of Love to God, and that they fear his Favour and Honour is not esteem'd and priz'd by them as they ought, in such as are sincerely his; yet their Care to please him, their Labours of Love, their Watchfulness, Prayer, and Diligence in his Work and Service, when they are willing to spend and be spent for him; while they thus live to him, and can die for him, are an undeniable Proof and Evidence of their Love to him. But this one thing, Mens not being able to bear the Labour of Religion, is a Rock, on which many a Soul hath split, and suffer'd an eternal Wreck. He that hath some love to Holiness, and yet not so much as to carry him through the Work of Holiness, is short of Sincerity; and whilst so, is short of Salvation. Holy Diligence will be a Witness of thy Sincerity; and then which way soever the World does go, and what Storms soever may fall, thou wilt have this to uphold thee, *Integrity and Uprightness shall preserve me*, and Eternity reward me.

3. The Obedience which God calls for, must be entire Obedience, not only the Obedience of the Whole Man, but to the whole Will of God: Psal. 119. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy Command-*

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146 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

ments. 1 Pet. 1. 14, 15. *As obedient Children, be ye Holy in all manner of Conversation.* Mat. 28. 20. *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* You are my Friends, if you do whatsoever I command you, John 15. 14. The great comprehensive Duty, wherein all the rest are included, and on which they depend; is, the holding up and maintaining God's Authority in the Soul. As God has set up his Authority over the Soul, his Word, which is to have the Government of it; so he has set up an Authority in the Soul, the Understanding and Conscience; and these under the Word are set in Authority over the subordinate and inferior Faculties, the Will, and the Passions or Affections: But Sin now hath made a Mutiny and Insurrection; the Will rises against Reason, and will not be guided; the Passions rebel against Conscience, and will not be govern'd; they take upon them to rule and govern it: and this is the great Reason of the Soul's Rebellion against God; while the Understanding and Conscience are maintain'd in their due Authority, and the Will and Affections held in their due Subjection, there the Lord reigneth. God shall be will'd the more, where nothing else is will'd too much; God shall be lov'd the more and fear'd the more, where nothing else is lov'd and fear'd too much. And how much Service might be done, and how much Quiet would be enjoy'd in the Heart, were this Authority and Subjection maintain'd and held up in it? we should then not only be abundantly serviceable, but all would be serene, and sweet, and comfortable within us. If nothing were will'd but what should be will'd, we should ever have our Will; if nothing were desir'd but what should be, and no more than it should be lov'd or desir'd, we should ever have what we love. If we were not angry, or griev'd, or afraid, but where we ought, and no more than we ought; what a Calm would there be upon our Spirits, even in such Cases, wherein the Spirits of others are like a troubled Sea, that cannot be at rest, whose Waters cast forth mire and dirt? But where there is such Disorder and Rebellion of the inferior against the superior Faculties, and thereby against God; there we are at a perpetual Loss both in point of Duty and Comfort.

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 147

4. That we be circumspect and careful: *Eph. 5. 15. See that ye walk circumspectly.* 'Tis not to be busy and active at all Adventures, but it is regular Action, where-in the Life of Christianity lies. He that acts by Line and Rule is the obedient Christian; what we ordinarily are in particulars, *pro his & nunc*, will best shew what we are. The circumspect Christian must eye and observe what's before him, must have his Eye upon his End, his Rule and his Goings; he must eye *Duty and Sin*, Opportunities and Temptations, his Times and Seasons; he must keep a strict eye on himself, and hold a strict hand on himself, must set a guard on his Tongue, his Eyes, Appetite, Company, Thoughts and Passions, all the Motions of his Soul, and the Actions of his Body.

3. That our Obedience be spiritual, the Obedience of Faith, *Rom. 16. 26.* It is the very Life of Jesus, *made manifest in our mortal Flesh: I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, Gal. 2. 20.* All the Acts of it are exerted and perform'd in the Strength of Christ; *I will go in the Strength of the Lord:* without him they can do nothing, *but can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth them.* As Christians cannot go thorow Duty, so they dare not set upon Duty, without looking up to Christ, and leaning upon him for Assistance. The Church is represented, *Cant. 8. 3. as coming out of the Wilderness leaning upon her Beloved:* and as their Dependence is continually upon him, and all their Acts of Obedience are exhibited and offer'd up in his Name, so the Praise of all is ascrib'd to him. God looks on all, and so they likewise do, as nothing worth without Christ; he is the Altar which sanctifies the Gift; it's Grace deriv'd from him that doth the Work, and therefore on his Head the Crown is set. If I am any thing that others are not, or have done any thing more than others, no thanks to me, and therefore no praise; *I will not sacrifice to my own Nos, but let all be ascrib'd to him, who is All in All to me.*

They walk in the Spirit, *Gal. 5. 16.* whom they have receiv'd, and are under his Leading and Guidance, *Rom. 8. 14.* and walk in his Light and Power: by his gracious Aid and Assistance all their Duties are perform'd; Prayer and Hearing, Obedience and Suffering, mortifying the Flesh and overcoming the World, through the

148 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

Spirit of the Lord, that dwells and abides in them. From hence their Love, and Joy, and Praise proceed, which are the most noble Acts of their Obedience; and these give Wings to their Hearts, carry them on more swiftly, and more sweetly thorow all their Course, and whatever difficulties they meet withal in it. How dull, and dead, and heartless are Christians, when this blessed Spirit once withdraws, tho but a little, from them! and how sad is it with many of us sometimes upon this account! By our estrangement from God, we even lose our selves, and are not what we are, because we are not where he is, and under the Influences of his Holy Spirit as before; by our distances from Heaven, we are even choak'd with the Damps of the Earth, and are fit for little, till we are again under those gracious Influences that were suspended; that we can warm our selves, dwelling in the Beams of this blessed Spirit, whereby we are enabled to get and give more Light and Heat.

Lastly, We must consider seriously what real Christianity is like to be attended with from without; what Sufferings it may cost us, what Scorn, Contempt and Persecutions of all sorts, in following Christ; whether we can drink of that Cup that he drank of, and be baptiz'd with that Baptism, the Baptism of Blood, if we be call'd to it, that he was baptiz'd with: lest when we are under the smart of these, we make our Retreat and shamefully go back; *Luke 14. 26—33.*

But now, he that knoweth what it is to be a Disciple of Christ, that hath look'd thro Religion, thro the length and breadth of it; that hath duly weigh'd all that can be said for or against his taking it up; that hath examin'd the Grounds and Reasons he hath for it, what weight there is in them; hath consider'd the Objections, has cast up the Cost and Charges of it; and as the Issue and Result of the most serious Debate, stands settled in his Judgment; that all things consider'd, it is indisputably the best and wisest in all respects, the safest Course; incomparably better to hearken to the Lord in all that he shall require, and to run all hazards with him; to give up himself to the Government of his Will, and to be his Servant, and through his Grace to follow him in Righteousness and Holiness all his days: whatever he shall be call'd to do or suffer for his sake, he will be at a point,
will

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 149

will venture all upon it; *The Lord is my God, him will I serve*, and follow in all things he shall speak: I will put my self into the everlasting Arms; I will go forth in his Name, and trust upon his everlasting Strength. This sincere Resolution will hold out, this is the Obedience of the Heart, which the Lord has promis'd to work in his People in this Covenant.

And then there is the Obedience of the Life; the former holy Inclination and Resolution springing up into Action, which is a necessary Proof of the Soundness of it. For tho sincere Resolution be Obedience in God's account, yet that Resolution which (supposing there be Time and Opportunity) does not break forth into Act, is undoubtedly unsound and deceitful. True Grace is the disposing and enabling the Heart for a holy Life; and where there is both a Will and a Power, Performance will certainly follow. This Sincerity of actual Obedience is that which the Psalmist looks to, *Psal. 119. 80. Let my Heart be sound in thy Statutes, that I be not ashamed.*

There is a Soundness in the Faith, and a Soundness in the Statutes and Commandments of the Lord. To be sound in the Faith, is the receiving and entertaining sound Doctrine, and the sound and sincere embracing of it. Soundness in the Statutes of the Lord, notes especially the Practice, the living or walking uprightly under the Power of that Doctrine, and under the Government and Obedience of his Statutes. And what the Obedience of the Life is, will easily be gather'd out of what has been spoken touching the Obedience of the Heart. I shall only add, that this Obedience is then sincere and sound Obedience, when,

(1.) In general, the whole Course of Life is the Issue of this foremention'd Resolution, when the Life is the Birth of the Purpose, the Fruit growing out of that holy Root. When the Soul hath devoted it self to God in Christ, and believingly, understandingly, deliberately decreed, and determin'd in his strength to keep his Word; and this goes into the Performances of the Life, and is the Root and Soul of that holy Course we walk in: there's Sincerity.

(2.) In particular Actions, when they are done in Simplicity and Singleness of Heart unto the Lord; when

150 Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.

whatever sinful ~~heart~~ there may be sometimes of carnal respects, that may have an influence upon the exerting and bringing them forth; yet the great Poise that moves the Wheels, the swaying Motive that brings us on, is God, and our Respect to his Will and Honour: then they are sincere. Now for this also the Lord undertakes in this gracious Covenant, promising not only Assistance, but Success, sufficient and efficacious Grace: *I will cause them to walk in my Statutes, and they shall keep my Judgments, and do them.* He will not only teach them his Statutes, and incline their Hearts to his Testimonies, and strengthen them for his Work; but will cause them to walk in his Statutes. The Event shall be sure; *They shall keep my Judgments, and do them.* The Lord does engage himself, to make us faithful to him.

7. Perseverance in the Covenant: *Jer. 32. 40. I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* This is another Benefit which the Lord promises in the Covenant to his People, their Preservation in the state of Grace to which they are called; that he once taking us to be a People to him in Christ, he will never forsake us any more, but keep us in that state for ever. The Perseverance of the Children of God is founded on God's Election, and the Immutability of his Counsel; *The Foundation of the Lord standeth sure, Rom. 8. 30. Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* This golden Chain will hold for ever, not a Link of it shall be broken: on whomsoever the first Link, *Election*, hath taken hold, it will infallibly bring him up to the last, which is *Eternal Glory*. God is not as Man, that he should repent. And by such Promises as are above mention'd, the Lord takes away that last great Scruple which the Soul is apt to make, in this manner: "Altho the Lord hath shew'd
"mercy unto me thus far, that he hath given me hope
"of the Forgiveness of my Sins past, and hath chang'd
"my Heart in some measure, so as it is my desire to do
"his Will; yet I find still such strong opposition against
"me, by Corruptions within and Temptations without,
"that I fear I shall never be able to hold out to the end;
"but

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 151

"but as David said, *I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul.*" So the Soul thinks in the midst of many Pursuits by the Enemy; "*I shall one day perish by the hand of Satan, and shall not be able to withstand him.*" Now to this Fear of our Heart the Lord answers by this Promise and Benefit, which he hath covenanted to make good to his People; he undertakes to keep us in the same estate of Grace, to which he hath brought us; he says you shall never perish, fear it not: *He that hath begun the good Work of Grace, will perfect it in us and for us.* And as God said to Jacob, Gen. 28. 15. *I am with thee, I will keep thee, and will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of; perform'd unto thee all that I have promis'd thee:* so the Lord says to a Believer, "*I will keep you, till I have perfected you.*" wards you *all the Good-pleasure of my Goodness, 2 Thess. 1. 11.* I will keep you in my own hand, *I will guide you by my Counsel, and afterward bring you to Glory; Psal. 73. 24.* This Blessing is promis'd to us in Jer. 32. 39. *And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* Also in Isa. 54. 8. *With everlasting Mercy have I had compassion on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer; for this is unto me as the Waters of Noah: the Mountains shall remove, and the Hills shall fall down, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be remov'd, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.* Plentiful is the Scripture in such Promises as these; Hos. 2. 19, 20. *I will betroth thee unto my self for ever.* When the Lord marrieth us to himself, he doth it with a purpose to be ours for ever: *whom God loves once with his conjugal Love, he loves them for ever unto the end; John 13. 1.* And thence it is, that those that are truly regenerate and sanctify'd, are compar'd to Mount Sion, which cannot be remov'd, Psal. 125. 1. and to a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, which continually flourishes and withers not, Psal. 1. 3. and to a House built upon a Rock, Mat. 7. And hence is that glorious Triumph of the Apostle, setting all contrary Power at defiance; *Who shall separate us from the Love of God? &c. Rom. 8. 31.* Neither Height, nor Depth, nor things present, nor things to come, &c. shall be able to

152 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

Separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And 2 Tim. 4. 8. *Henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* This the Lord will fulfil for his People, for he is both the Author and Finisher of their Salvation.

Arminians and Papists, who teach a falling away from a state of Grace, know not the difference between the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace. That those that are adopted, sanctify'd, and planted into Christ, may fall away and perish, is a Doctrine contrary to the whole Tenour of the Covenant of Grace, injurious to God, and uncomfortable to the Children of God. It's true, there is a kind of seeming Holiness which may be lost, a Form of Godliness which may vanish and come to nought; *Heb. 6. 4, 6. & 10. 29.* and it's also true, that God's own People call'd and chosen may much damp and quench the Grace of God in them, and may shew much Infirmary in particular Falls, which they are subject unto, being sometimes so far left to themselves; as we see in *David, Solomon, Peter, &c.* Acts of Grace may be interrupted in them for a season, the Sense of it may be much lessen'd, the Power of it weaken'd, and the Degree of it abated; but the Habit of it cannot be utterly lost, the Life of it never goes out: a Man may be in a Swoon, and yet his Life be in him still. The Certainty of the Perseverance of Believers, is built upon these Foundations:

(1.) God is able to establish his People, and to keep them from falling, *Jude ver. 24.* and to make them stand, *Rom. 16. 25.* This is the Apostle's Argument; and tho it's true indeed God will not do all things that he can, yet he will do all things that he hath promis'd to do. Now this being his Promise, that he will preserve his People; therefore if he can do it, surely he will do it, because he hath promis'd it. And thus our blessed Lord himself argues from the Power of God, *John 10. 28, 29.* and proves the undoubted Salvation of those that believe, because God is in Power greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of his hand. Thus Abraham argu'd with respect to the Promise God had given him of a Son, and so may every true Believer.

(2.) All the Gifts of God which accompany Salvation, are given without Repentance, *Rom. 11. 29.* *Hos. 13. 14.*
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Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings: 153

Whom he loveth, he loves to the end; and will never take away his fatherly Mercy from them: tho he may chide, yet he will not cast off and forsake them. *Iſa.* 46. 3, 4 & *Mal.* 3. 6.

(3.) It would shake the Foundation of God's Election, our Calling and Sanctification being according to his Purpose, *Rom.* 8. 28, 30. *2Tim.* 1. 9. Hence Faith is call'd the Faith of God's Elect, *Tit.* 1. 1. and those that are sanctify'd, are said to be chosen unto it, *Eph.* 1. 3, 4. And this Foundation of the Lord remaineth sure, which our blessed Saviour himself asserts, *Mat.* 24. 24.

(4.) It would frustrate the Efficacy of our blessed Lord's Intercession, and that Prayer of his which he made for us when he was here on earth, which was and is a Testification of the care he hath of us now in Heaven; *Father, keep them in thy Name.* And he is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever; he is our faithful High-Priest, who beareth our Names upon his Breast in the holy Place, which he is now enter'd into, *Exod.* 28. 29. And having set his People as a Seal upon his Heart, he presents them with his heartiest Affection to his Father, upon the account of his own Sacrifice which he has offer'd up on their behalf. What Christ pray'd for on the behalf of Peter and the rest of his Disciples, the same Prayer he makes for all those that believe on him thro their Word, *John* 17. 20. and is always heard and accepted by the Father on their behalf, *John* 11. 42. So that it is not possible, that those that he intercedes for should perish. The Lord has promis'd he will not depart from his People; and he hath likewise graciously promis'd that they who are once effectually call'd, shall not depart from him; *Jer.* 32. 40. This difference there is between the Covenant of Works, and the new and better Covenant which is now ratify'd by the Blood of Christ; Adam under that, tho perfectly holy, yet standing in his own Strength, quickly fell; but the weakest Believer in Christ, and standing in his Strength, shall never fall.

Obj. Those Promises which sound as if they were absolute, are to be expounded by other Promises which are express'd conditionally; as, *If ye continue, If ye faint not, &c.*

Ans.

154 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

Ans. These conditional Expressions are added, not to weaken the Force of those absolute Promises before named, as if one sort of Promises did cross another, and were to weaken our Confidence in them; but for other Causes:

(1.) The Apostle writing to visible Churches, in which there were both sound and unsound Professors, these conditional Expressions have in them the Force of a secret Warning, and quickening Exhortation to every one, that he look to his standing, that he be truly bottom'd and grounded on Christ, and continue so, and to take heed lest he fall. It is by his Fear, which God hath promis'd to put into our Hearts, that we are kept from departing from him. And,

(2.) It is a sweet and useful Consideration observ'd by an eminent Instrument in the Cause of God's Truth, that in the comparing and compounding of these conditional Promises with the absolute, we must place the conditional in the first rank, and then the absolute in the second: to instance in that, *If ye continue, and persevere to the end, you shall be saved.* Here is the conditional Promise in the major Proposition; then follows, *But ye shall continue, ye shall never depart from me.* Here is the absolute Promise in the Minor; whence follows the Conclusion of Assurance in the Conscience of a Believer, *I shall be saved.* And it may be observ'd, that as the Lord has made many Promises conditionally, respecting our Duty, and what he may justly require of us; so he has also graciously promis'd in this new Covenant, Grace and Strength in some measure answerable, to enable us to the performance of it: the one to quicken us in the way of our Duty, the other to ground our Faith and Confidence upon. And the inverting of this Order breeds great Disturbance and Confusion in the Minds of Christians, when they set the conditional Promises after the absolute. Those Caveats and Warnings given to take heed of falling from Grace, serve to keep the Children of God more watchful, by which Watchfulness they are helped to stand more firmly, they are admonish'd of their own Infirmary, and made more careful to rest on Christ, by whom they are preserv'd. They serve also to leave all Hypocrites and Apostates without excuse, they being warned of the Danger, but would not take heed.

As

As to what is objected, by any, That this Doctrine has a tendency to promote Security and Carelessness; certainly they know not what this Assurance is, who think that to be the fruit of it: the Experience of the Children of God speaks the contrary. It doth indeed breed an holy Security, knowing the Promises which the Lord hath made, thus to keep us for ever to himself: we may now say as the holy Prophet, *I will lay me down in peace, and sleep, for the Lord sustaineth me.* And tho Legions of Devils beset me round about, yet will I trust in this: *The Lord is my Life and my Salvation, of whom should I be afraid? He will deliver me from every evil Work, and preserve me blameless to his heavenly Kingdom.* 2 Tim. 4. 18. Look into the Saints and Servants of God who have felt most Assurance hereof in themselves, and see whether it wrought any such effect in them. *David saith, Thou wilt guide me by thy Counsel, and afterward wilt bring me to Glory,* Psal. 73. 24. But did this Assurance make him carnally secure? did he infer from hence, I may take my own Liberty, and live as I list? No, he speaks the quite contrary, *It is good for me to draw nigh to God.* It made him to love God more, and to cleave to him in his inward Affection, and to make God the Portion of his Soul for ever. So the Apostle Paul likewise, who when he had so great an Assurance as he expresses, *Rom. 8.* lays out himself with the greatest Diligence, Zeal, and Watchfulness for Christ.

Quest. Now if it be inquir'd, how or by what means the Lord will thus establish and keep Believers from falling?

Ans. There are two things concurring: 1. An inward Principle and Work of Faith wrought in us. 2. An external assisting Power of God, upholding and strengthening that weak Faith which is in us, and treading down our Enemies under our feet. 1 Pet. 1. 5. *We are kept by the Power of God, through Faith, unto Salvation.* Faith makes us see where our Strength lies, not in our selves, but in God thro Christ; and being then sensible of our own Infirmary and Weakness, Faith flies unto this Power of God to be kept by him: it speaks in the Heart of a Christian as *Jehoshaphat* did, 2 Chron. 20. 13. *Lord, I know not what to do, I am not able to stand against all this multitude of Enemies which beset my Soul on every*

156 Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.

every side: *but my Eyes are towards thee*, and my Dependence on thy Grace and Strength; *2 Chron. 14. 11.* Now the Soul thus looking unto God by the Eye of Faith, and resting upon his Power, the Power of God comes in for our help; so as Faith, in a way of Duty, stands still to see and behold the Salvation of God. To this agrees that of the Prophet, *Isa. 26. 3. The Lord keepeth in perfect peace the Soul which is stayed on him.* We stay upon him by Faith, and he keeps us in peace and safety by his Power. So *Eph. 6. 10.* where we are exhorted to stand fast, and be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might. We must have recourse to the Lord, and to his Almighty Power by Faith, and then we shall stand fast and never be mov'd. And now as the Lord will preserve his People in the state of Grace to which he hath call'd them, so let us consider what Grace is herein shew'd us from the Lord at all times, and the Benefit we have thereby; *for by Grace we stand.*

Were we left to our selves, we should soon do as our first Father did; there is naturally the same revolting Spirit in us, as was in him, an Aptness and Inclination of Heart ready to depart away: *Jer. 5. 23. Heb. 3. 12. Loving to wander,* *Jer. 14. 10.* We have also the same Enemy, the same Tempter to draw us (with like Temptations) from God and our Communion with him; *Luke 22. 34.* And in those that are not preserv'd by Grace, these things (Corruption within, and Temptation without) prevail so far, as to turn back many who seem'd to begin in the Spirit, to cause them to end in the Flesh; they turning back again after their washing, to their wallowing in the Mire. It's Grace therefore whereby we stand, else we should fall away as well as they.

And what an exceeding great Benefit is this, seeing without this one, all the former Blessings of the Covenant were soon made as nothing to us! For if this Blessing of Perseverance were wanting, we might lose our Interest in God again, come again under the Guilt of Sin, &c. and be ensnar'd again in the Snare of our Sins. It's therefore no less Blessing to be kept in a state of Grace, than to be brought into it. And then consider also the Danger of Apostacy, that the End of such is worse than was their Beginning; *2 Per. 2. 20.* Tho their Beginning was naught, sinful, and miserable, being hypocritical;

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 357

critical; yet their End is worse, and it had been better for them never to have known the way of Righteousness, than when they have known it, to turn from it. Such shall receive the sorer Vengeance, *Heb. 10. 29.* and the greater the Danger is of falling back, the greater is the Blessing in being preserv'd in the Grace in which we stand.

This therefore serves for endless Comfort to all the Saints and faithful Servants of God. Temporary Blessings yield temporary Refreshings, but this Benefit of Perseverance assures us of good things more abiding and eternal; the Consideration whereof is matter of endless Comfort, everlasting Joy should be upon our heads, *Isa. 35. 10.* Be our Enemies ever so strong and mighty, our Infirmities ever so many, yet neither their Strength, nor our own Weaknesses, expose us to their Will; but we shall be kept safe unto Salvation, by a Divine Power which is above all, and over all. The Lions may roar, but shall not prevail: *Pharaoh* may pursue us with his Chariots and Horsemen, but wait a while, and we shall see the Lord fight for *Israel* against the *Egyptians*; we shall see the Salvation of God. In *Christ's* Prayer to his Father on the behalf of his Disciples, it was, that they might have his Joy fulfill'd in themselves, that he would keep them in his Name, and preserve them from Evil, that none of them might be lost: and this he did, that they knowing his Intercession for them, might be fill'd with Comfort; as knowing his Petitions, who was the Beloved of his Father, put up to him for them, could not possibly return in vain. This makes our Joy a full Joy, that we shall be kept in this state of Grace for ever. Tho we be not yet exempted from falling into Sin, thro manifold Infirmities, yet we have a God to go to, who will pardon the Sins of his People: tho we are weak and ready to fall, yet the Lord will either put under his hand, and prevent us that we fall not: or if he suffer us to fall, yet he will raise us up again; we shall not so fall, as to rise no more. *Mic. 7. 8.* Let not God's People be dejected overmuch, to walk uncomfortably because of their Infirmities; be comforted against them from hence, The Lord hath made a Covenant with you, that he will never forsake you. If it has pleas'd him once to make you his People, he will cast you off
no

158 *Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings.*

no more; 1 Sam. 12. 22. Thou that complaineſt and walkeſt heavily becauſe of thy ſinful Corruptions, which burden thee, and preſſ thee down; let me aſk, and let thy Heart make answer within thee, Do thy Corruptions and Failings make thee leſs to eſteem Chriſt? or do they make Chriſt more precious to thee? If thy Corruptions get within thy Heart, and make any thing more dear and precious to thee than Chriſt is, this is dangerous: but if by the Senſe of thy Corruption thou art made to draw nearer to him, to eſteem more of him, to cling faſter to him; ſuch Infirmity may ſerve to humble thee, but it ſhall never deſtroy thee. Tho thou be weak, yet his Grace is ſufficient for thee, ſufficient to pardon thy Failings, and to keep thee, that neither the Gates of Hell, nor Sin, nor Death ſhall ever prevail againſt thee. Commit thy Soul therefore in well-doing to thy faithful Creator, who hath created thee anew in Chriſt Jeſus, and know that as he is able to keep, ſo he will keep that which is committed unto him againſt that day.

Let this ſerve alſo for Caution and Counſel to all God's faithful ones, to take heed of Self-Confidence, and thinking to ſtand by their own Strength. Know wherein your Strength lieth, it is not in your ſelves, in *his own Might ſhall no Man prevail*, 1 Sam. 2. 9. But your Strength and Safety lieth in this Covenant of Peace which the Lord has made with you; he keepeth *the feet of his Saints, and preſerves their Souls*, Pſal. 97. 10. & Pſ. 34. 22. *None that truſt in him ſhall periſh.* *Sampſon's* Strength lay not in his Hair, but in the Covenant of his God. While we cleave to our Covenant, and keep the Lord with us, then are we ſtrong and do valiantly; but when we truſt in our ſelves, and withdraw our ſelves from God, who is our Strength, then we are weak and overcome. Nothing makes a readier way for the Falls of God's Children than this, that they grow too confident in themſelves, and in that Grace which they have receiv'd. When the Lord ſeeeth this Diſtemper growing on us, he leaves us a while to our ſelves to heal this Evil in us; and to let us find, that our way to be ſtrong is to be weak, weak in our ſelves, that we may be *ſtrong in the Power of his Might*, 2 Cor. 12. 9. & Iſa. 45. 24. to let us ſee we are unable of our ſelves to do any thing,

Sanctification, with all Spiritual Blessings. 159

thing, so much as to think a good Thought, 2 Cor. 1. 5. But are able to do all things thro' the Power of Christ strengthening us, Phil. 4. 13. Whatever Duty we have to do, look up therefore to him for Help; let us rely upon him, and make him our Strength as well as our Redeemer: *Psal. 119. 14.*

And let all labour for a State of Grace, to get into Christ, and so to be within this Covenant of Grace, and to get our Souls endu'd with such Truth of Grace, as may assure us of our abiding in it for ever. This is that part which can never be taken from us, it's a Treasure that will never fail; *Luke 10. 42.* All the things of the World are fading and perishing; Riches take themselves wings, and may soon vanish away, *Prov. 23. 5.* or else are made a Prey and Spoil by the Enemy; and had we the greatest abundance of them, yet we must go naked out of the World, and take nothing away with us. But Grace is a durable and everlasting Possession, and never fails; if we live, it lives with us; and if we die, it will not forsake us. One Grain of true sanctifying Grace, tho' but as a Grain of Mustard-Seed, is of more worth than the Riches and Treasures of a Kingdom: you that want it, seek it as your Life; you that have it, keep it as you would keep your Soul: let both take heed of being deceiv'd with Shews and Shadows of Grace, instead of the Truth of it; all is not Gold that glitters. Every one that makes a shew, and carries out in his Profession a Form of Godliness, hath not the Truth and Power of it in his Heart: these Shadows will vanish, and come to nothing; it is the Substance only which remains. Let us take heed we be not deceiv'd; there is nothing in which a Mistake is so dangerous, as in this matter in hand; seeming Shews and Shadows only of Grace will end in real *Misery*, whereas Truth and Soundness of Grace will bring to a *Weight of Glory*. Let our Hearts be knit unto Christ, get an humble, meek, upright Frame of Spirit; instead of a Fulness with our own Gifts, let us get a Sense and Feeling of our Wants and Weaknesses, and come to him that hath all Fulness dwelling in him, that out of his Fulness we may receive a Supply of all our spiritual Wants. Such an humble, thirsting, impotent Creature, sensible of its own insufficiency, yet lying continually at the feet of Christ, shall

160 *The Earth, with all Temporal Blessings.*

shall stand and continue to the end, till they receive the End of their Faith and Hope, the Salvation of their Soul. When thousands fall at their side, and ten thousands at their right hand, yet shall they stand upright, they shall never fall; 2 Pet. 1. 10. This abiding Grace let us every one labour for; seek it as Silver; call, cry for it, dig deep and search for it as for hid Treasures, Prov. 2. 4. Blessed is he that findeth it, blessed now, and blessed for ever.

C H A P. XIII.

The Earth, and all Temporal Blessings that are truly good for us.

VI. **T**HE Good Things of this Life are contain'd also in the Covenant: tho the Children of God have not their Reward in this Life, nor their Portion in this World, yet it also is theirs; Mat. 5. 5. *The Meek shall inherit the Earth.* 1 Cor. 3. 22. *Things present and things to come are all yours.* Mark 10. 30. *Houses and Brethren, &c.* Prov. 3. 16. *Length of Days are in her right hand, and in her left hand Riches and Honour.* Mat. 6. 33. & Ezek. 10.

1st. The Good Things present: nothing truly good for them shall be with-held from them; Psal. 84. 11.

2^{ly}. The Evil Things present: these also shall work for good to the People of God, Rom. 8. 28.

The Lord knowing how apt we are to have our Minds taken up with careful Thoughts about them, and also that we cannot (in our ordinary Course) be without them; Mat. 6. 32. he hath therefore made known unto us his Care which he has over us, that he will provide whatsoever is needful and convenient for us; to the end that we knowing his Promises concerning these things, might by Faith rest upon his Faithfulness, and might be free in our Minds from all vexing distracting Cares, serving him cheerfully in our places according to his Will, looking to him, and depending upon him for the Supply of all those things that we stand in need of.

And

And we may observe how the Lord has made us some general Promises of all good things (as is above mention'd) *Psal.* 84. 11. so also *Psal.* 34. 10. So as we may be fully assur'd, we shall not want any thing that is truly good. And because the want of some one thing needful might more disquiet us than the possession of many things could cheer us, therefore he has promis'd to give us all things; and beside these general Promises, he has also given us Promises of many particular Blessings, as of Length of Days, Protection, Health, &c. Food and Clothing convenient: these the Lord has promis'd to his covenanted People, and we have them laid down in *Levit.* 26. 3—14 *Deut.* 28. 1—15. *Psal.* 112. 2, 3. & 132. 15. *Isa.* 33. 15, 16. *Jer.* 31. 12. *Ezek.* 36. 30. *Mat.* 6. 33. *2 Cor.* 9. 8. *1 Tim.* 4. 8. The more of these is mention'd, that seeing so many and large Promises are made to us, we might be encourag'd more to believe and rest upon the Faithfulness of him that hath promis'd. If the Lord had spoken but once to us in the whole Scripture concerning these things, we should have had no cause to doubt of the Truth of his Word; but when he is pleas'd to assure us of it again and again, it cannot be without much Unbelief, if after all we believe him not, and cast not our Care upon him; the Lord himself reckoning these Promises a part of his Covenant made with his People: *Deut.* 8. 18. *Lev.* 26. 5, 6. *Psal.* 111. 5. *Ezek.* 34. 25, 27.

And that we may assuredly rest upon the Faithfulness of God in respect to these things, as far as he sees them good for us, as well as those that concern the Life to come;

(1.) Consider the Lord's All-sufficiency, and that he is infinitely able to supply all our Wants, and that he is abundant in Goodness; not sparing, but most bountiful and ready to communicate to us according to our Wants, requiring this of us to our Fellow-Creatures.

(2.) His merciful Nature and most tender Love to his People constrain him to it; he pities their Wants, is sensible of their Sorrows and Necessities, and is delighted in the Prosperity of his Servants.

(3.) He hath already given us, who are in Covenant with him, greater things than these, his Son, his Spirit, Himself; how shall he not then give unto us these lesser, and all other things? *Rom.* 8. 32.

162 *The Earth, with all Temporal Blessings,*

(4.) Consider Christ has purchased them for his People, he emptied himself and became poor, to make us rich: 2 Cor. 8. 9.

(5.) Our Bodies are the Members of Christ, and Temples for the Spirit to dwell in, and therefore we may be assured of all that is convenient for us, being Members of his Body; the greatness of the Love he bears to Christ as well as to us for his sake, may assure us of it.

(6.) God is in Covenant with our Whole Man, he is the God of our Body as well as of our Soul and Spirit; we are wholly his, he has taken us wholly to be his own; and as he is a God to his People, to pardon, and sanctify, and save our Souls; so he is the God of our Bodies, to feed and clothe them, and to minister to them such things as are convenient for them: 1 Cor. 6. 13. as the Body is for the Lord, to serve and glorify him, so is the Lord also for the Body, to redeem, nourish, and to glorify it.

(7.) It is not for the Honour of his Kingdom, that those that are his Subjects should be expos'd to Wants in needful things: if they be left destitute, the dishonour would redound to Christ, as if he sought not, or car'd not for the Welfare of his People.

(8.) The Lord knows how many Discouragements we may meet with here, to dishearten us in his Service; and therefore casts in these outward Blessings, to encourage and provoke us to serve him, with more willingness and cheerfulness of Spirit; 2 Chr. 31. 4. Job 1.

(9.) The Lord hath commanded such Duties to his Servants as they cannot perform without a supply in these things, Works of Love, Mercy, Kindness, Helpfulness one to another; he would have us abound in these things, and (as Examples) to go before all other People, and he will not send a Message, and cut off the Feet of him whom he sends, Prov. 26. 6.

Again, the Lord looks for Service from our outward Man; Rom. 12. 1. and 1 Cor. 6. but he will not reap where he hath not sown, nor look to gather where he has not scatter'd: He will sustain us if he looks for Service from us.

(10.) Farther, we are his Household and Family, and therefore he will provide for his own; he that has charged us to do so, he will not, he cannot be wanting to any of

of his: If he feed the Ravens and clothe the Lillies, Mat. 6. 26. he will not suffer his Children to want Bread. He knows that we have need of these things, Mat. 6. 12. and having commanded us to give to him that needeth, and open our Hand wide unto the Poor, Ephes. 4. 28. and Deut. 15. 11. surely he will not shut up the Bowels of his Compassion from his own needy Servants, but will open his Treasure to them, to satisfy them with all that is truly good for them. Hence one says, "If the poorest Servant of Christ had need of the Riches of the Indies, and that the Lord saw such a Condition good for them, they should not want them; his Power could easily provide them, and his Love to his People in Covenant with him, would bestow them."

(II.) Lastly, The Lord, by giving us these outward things, would nourish our Faith in the Hopes of Spiritual and Heavenly Things; for seeing his Care over us in these lesser things, we may be sure he will not neglect his own People, in those that are of greater moment. The outward Blessings which God gave Israel, were Pledges and Tokens of better things, of spiritual Blessings: *Manna*, of the true Bread from Heaven; the Water out of the Rock which quench'd their bodily Thirst, was a Sign and Pledge of Christ the true Rock, out of whom springs the Water of Life. He gave them a good and fruitful Land to dwell in, wherein they lived with so much Delight and Pleasure; but it was not given as an outward Blessing only, but as a Pledge of a better Inheritance.

Obj. But sometimes we see God's faithful Servants to be kept short in these outward Blessings; how comes it to pass, the Lord having made such ample Promises to them?

Ans. 1. All the Promises of temporal Blessings, are subordinate and subservient to the Promises which concern our inward Man, and our eternal Salvation: God does not promise these outward things so as to make against our spiritual Good, but so as to farther and help it forward; he promises them with Christ, not against him, nor to hinder his Kingdom in our Hearts. If it be so that a Sufficiency and Abounding in these things may better us in the inward Man, we shall not want them; but because the Lord sees it better sometimes that we be kept strait in these things, being so apt to abuse them

164 *The Earth, with all Temporal Blessings,*

to the fulfilling our wanton Desires, to Pride, Security, Confidence, and trusting in them; here the Lord is free from his Promise, lest by these we lose or decline in our spiritual Graces, and more solid and lasting Comforts. But,

2. The Lord will sometimes try his People; *Pf. 11. 5.* thus he did in *Heb. 11.* so also *Israel* in the Wilderness, *Deut. 8. 2.* and as he try'd *Job.* God will sometimes see whether we serve him for Wages or no, or that we would continue to serve him out of Love, tho he should give us nothing: but these times of Trial last not always, these are not the ways of God's ordinary Dispensation towards his People; and tho the Lord herein sometimes cuts short his Servants in these outward things, it is to *do them good in the latter end*, *Dent. 8. 16.* The Hardships which *Israel* suffer'd in the Wilderness, were recompenced with a Land flowing with Milk and Honey.

3. Sometimes the Lord withholds these good things from us for a Chastisement of Sin, according to that, *Jer. 5. 25.* *Your Iniquities have turned away these things, and your Sins have withholden good things from you.* When we go out of the way in which the Blessing is promis'd, or that he sees our enjoying of these outward Blessings would hinder our spiritual Good; in such Cases the Children of God may be exercis'd with Wants and Necessities, and yet his Promises fail not: We shall have them in such a Way or Measure as he sees best for us. They shall have ever as much of these things as will suffice them, and that is as much as *All*; they shall not want any thing but what they may, and may better want. *Your Father knows that you have need of these things*; and he hath said, *That those that seek him shall not want any good thing*, *Psal. 34. 10.* *The Earth is the Lord's, and the Fulness thereof.* Too much of these things may be more than they can well bear, and might therefore be to their prejudice; but if the whole World can supply their Necessities out of all its Store, they shall not want it.

4. What the People of God have, that are in Covenant with him, they have a better Title to than any others in the World; what they have descends upon them not barely by Providence, but by Promise, *Heb. 1. 2.* *Rom. 8. 17.* Christ being Heir of all things, and they are Fellow-Heirs with Christ: and a little, coming from the Promise, hath more

more in it than the greatest Abundance that others enjoy. A little from Love is a great Blessing, the Children of God enjoy him in every Morsel and every Drop; and a Drop from Heaven will turn thy Bran into the finest Flower, and thy Water into Wine.

And, O! what serene and quiet Lives, how void of Care, distracting Care, might the Servants of God live in the World, who have not only his common Providence but Promise to live upon, which has all things in it! The Language of which is, thou shalt want nothing, thou nor thine, which the Lord has bound himself to the performance of; only we must not look to be our own Carvers, and it must not be what we our selves may apprehend, but what the Lord sees best for us. If what we want in Water be made up in Wine, we are no losers by it: A short Meal with a Smile from Heaven, would turn a Fast into a Feast to us, being under a Covenant Blessing; and if the upper Spring run freely, we may well abate a nether Spring. Let the Promise be my Portion, let the Pipes be kept open to my Soul, and then the least pittance for this Carcase may well suffice me, if more than this would prejudice my better Part. O, my Lord, let me feed with thee, and I will not quarrel whatever my Fare be. Let my Portion be from thy Table: Let me hear thy Voice [I am thine, and with me all things] and I am content to be at thy Allowance. Let thy Deed of Gift, thy gracious Covenant, stand sure to me, and put in my Childrens Names there, and I would ask no more for my self or them.

2dly. The Evil things of this Earth also are theirs, the Cross is in the Covenant: *Psal. 89. 30. If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Statutes, &c. I will visit their Transgressions with a Rod, and their Iniquities with Scorpions; nevertheless, &c. If need be, they are exercis'd with manifold Afflictions and Temptations, by which the Lord sheweth forth his Faithfulness to them; 1 Pet. 1. 6. Psal. 119. 75, 67. The Cross is not only impos'd on the Saints as their Burden, but bequeath'd unto them as a Legacy, when it shall be to their advantage: Phil. 1. 29. Unto you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake: It's given to them as an Honour and Privilege, and join'd with the most glorious Gift, the Gift of Faith. The Mysteries*

166 *The Earth, with all Temporal Blessings,*

of a crucify'd Jesus, and of his crucify'd Saints, do fill up the whole New Testament: But by virtue of the Covenant, the Cross is become a Blessing; *Mar. 5. 10, 11.* For,

1. The Curse is separated from it. Our blessed Lord bare both together, and that made his Cup so bitter, but now he hath divided them; the Curse he hath taken upon himself, but is still left upon obstinate and impenitent Unbelievers; and he has laid only the naked Cross on his faithful Servants. Every Affliction is a Curse to the Wicked, but the Curse it self is turned into a Blessing to Believers. Whatever Troubles come upon thee, there is no Venom in them, tho there be Anguish and Pain, yet there is no Wrath; the Sting is taken out, and tho they be ill looked, yet there is no Ill-Will in them; they come upon no ill Intent, nor shall have any evil Issue. The Smirings of the Wicked are to thee as the Smittings of the Righteous were to the Psalmist, a precious Balm, *Psal. 141. 5.* and thou mayst say (if a Child of God, and one in Covenant with him) let the Wicked smite me, whether with the Tongue, or what they will, it shall not break my Head, much less my Heart; it shall be a Kindness to me, and an excellent Oil. For,

2. The Cross, and every Affliction, is sanctify'd to its Ends; it hath many holy and excellent Ends, which shall be accomplished by it. As Afflictions are order'd to the Children of God, sometimes to prove, sometimes to reprove them, to humble, to purge and purify them; so whatever they are sent to them for, they shall not return in vain: *By this the Iniquity of Jacob shall be purged, &c. Isa. 27. 9.*

3. The Cross is proportion'd to their Need and Strength; *Jer. 30. 11. I will correct thee in measure;* just so much as will serve shall suffice: The wise Physician hath respect both to the Need and Strength of the Patient; *Isa. 57. 16. I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth, lest the Spirit should fail before me, and the Souls which I have made.* The Apostle tells the Servants of God, they have need of Patience; and their Experience tells them, they have need also to have their Patience exercis'd: and the Wants of God's Children, in this respect, are different; some are knotty Pieces, and need more, others are tender, and upon them less will serve: the Stubborn Child

must have more Stripes; the shaking of the Rod will do more on some Spirits, than the smart of it on others; but all need something. Let him only that is without Sin, say, I have no need of Shame and Sorrow: The Lord delights not in his Childrens Tears; *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men*, but yet he had rather they should cry than perish. Wonder not, Christians, your tender Lord puts you to Pain, and that your Pains are so sharp and many, *your Heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things*. It is a Mercy that he will chastize; his Breakings of us are his Blessings, and his Woundings are our Cures; and so by our own, as by our Lord's Stripes, we are healed. When we shall review and read over all his darker Providences, and behold the Wisdom and Tenderness, which is attemper'd with his Severities, and evident'd in his laying on so much, and yet no more than was needful, we shall then say with the Psalmist, *Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*. O! my Lord, let me not want thy Staff nor thy Rod, neither a Friend nor an Enemy, neither a Calm nor a Storm, neither Food nor Medicine; if my Disease be too strong for my Physick, let me have yet a stronger Potion: If my wanton Heart will not be tamed, let me have more Fetters put on me, and a heavier Load, and till thou seest it is so, let me never say, it is enough: Let me never be weary of my Remedy till I am cur'd of my Disease, and rather suffer by the hand of Satan, than perish utterly by the hand of any Lust. Spare not, Lord, to smite thy Servant, so long as this is needful for me, till thou hast thereby smitten down all my Enemies: Correct me, O Lord, yet in Judgment, but not in thy Fury, lest I be consumed and brought to nothing.

4. The Cross hath its special Comforts: Read 2 Cor. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 Verses. The Comforts of the Cross are often the sweetest and the fullest that the Servants of God ever taste on this side the Crown; the first Draught is often bitter, the green Cross is heavy, and it's necessary perhaps it should be so; as it is with some medicinal Waters, it works by its weight. The first Conflict with Temptations, may put us to an harder brunt than we are aware of; but it may be needful it should be so, that it may be for our greater good afterward. So my Phy-

168 *The Earth, with all Temporal Blessings,*

sick will work, I am content it make me sick. It's observable, it is not said of the Cross alone, that it worketh Patience; but of Tribulation, the pinching of the Cross, and the pain it puts us to, works Patience and a quiet bearing of it: When we feel the Thorns and the Nails, when the Irons enter into our Souls, then perhaps it works the most successfully. A Prison or a Dungeon will look uncouth at the first; but when your Lord comes in and visits you, then the Sweetness and Pleasure comes; and the more Frowns at the Threshold and Entering into it, the more Kisses afterward from him may be expected; for in all your Afflictions he is afflicted. A Child of God in Affliction and Suffering, may at first perhaps behold a dreadful Sight of Sins lying at the door; all that he has ever done against Christ, his former Unthankfulness, Unfaithfulness, Unkindness, and Rebellion against his Lord, may then stand forth, and stare him in the Face, that he may say as Pharaoh's Butler, *I remember my Faults this day.* O therefore let us beware of Sin, this will make the Cross heavy, the remembrance of Mercies which we have abused, the Sabbaths, and Ordinances, and Liberty we once enjoy'd, but trifled and wasted away, will then add weight to the Burden of it: this should make us to dread Sin now, which will make our Suffering so exceeding bitter. Yet be not dismay'd; after these Frowns of Love which we may at first be entertain'd with, our Lord may then appear and smile again; and then the Sweetness of his Presence, will make the greatest Sufferings pleasant to us: It was this made that blessed Martyr call the Stake and Flames he was then enclos'd in, a Bed of Flowers. But here Christians must take heed of Mistakes, or wilful Errors; for tho' it is an Argument of a gracious Spirit, to be always ready to suffer for Christ when he calls us to it, to take up our Cross for his sake, yet we must also take heed that we run not into it before he send us. I would not go to a Prison without a Mittimus from Heaven, says the Holy Mr. *Allen*, lest if my Suffering be of my self, I be there left to shift for my self. When we suffer because we will be Christians, and will retain our Integrity, be Holy and Righteous, then we suffer upon Christ's Call; when we must either suffer or sin, either lose our Liberty, Ease and Comforts, or wound our Consciences; when our blessed Lord himself shall

shall lay the Cross upon us in our way, that we must either submit to it, or turn aside out of his way, and cannot avoid it without Sin; then we have his Call to it, and may look for his gracious Presence with us, and Assistance of us under it: but whatever Cross be before us, if we have a way open so as it may be avoided without Sin, and God has left us a way open for our escape without Sin, we must not then cast our selves into a suffering State. Yet the far greater Danger is on the other hand; and tho the Call, in respect to some Circumstances of it, may seem doubtful, yet when we have carefully enquir'd the Mind of God, and truly follow the Dictates of our Conscience, sincerely design the Honour of Christ and his Gospel; tho we should mistake in some Circumstances of the Case, yet if we chuse Affliction for fear of Iniquity, the Lord will graciously own our Sufferings, and greatly accept and reward our readiness thereto.

And how soon a Call to suffer, may be the Case of Christians at this day, we know not; how soon such a fiery Tryal may come upon us, and be our lot, if we will not comply with that Idolatrous Worship, which has so long overspread our neighbour Nation, and so great a part of the Christian World, and which we have had too much cause of late Years to apprehend to have been hastning towards us; tho, blessed be the Lord, that Prospect of Danger at present is so mercifully remov'd from us. What need then have we to be preparing for the Sufferings we may be call'd unto, and that Cross, the taking up of which, our holy Profession and real Christianity so much depends upon, *Mat. 16. 24.* And let us seriously consider in such a Case that awful threatning, *Mat. 10. 33.* *If any deny me before Men, him will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* And as we are not to seek for Suffering without a Call, so we must not flinch or seek to avoid the Sufferings which we are called out unto, for any Carnal or By-Respects; but we may and must with Cheerfulness, in such a Case, commit our selves to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator, *1 Pet. 4. 19.* read that Chapter: and let us take along with us for our farther Encouragement to this Duty, which the Lord hath graciously given to his suffering Servants, *Mat. 10. 32.* *Whosoever therefore shall confess me before Men, him will I confess before my Father, which is in Heaven;*

270 *The Earth, with all Temporal Blessings,*

Heaven: See Mr. Rich. Allen's *Treatise of the Covenant*, Pag. 51, 52, 53, 54, 55. which may be useful to direct, for the preventing of mistakes on either hand.

These things premised; let us consider farther, for our Encouragement in this way of our Duty, what we may expect our suffering State to be sweetened with.

1. A more plentiful Diffusion of spiritual Grace; it's never better with the Children of God, than when Grace is most flourishing: in comparison with this, all other Joys which this World affords are empty things. He is not a Christian, that cannot say 'tis Summer with him when these Flowers appear in their Beauty, 1 Pet. 1. 8. Flourishing Faith and Love have their glorious Joys. The Springs of Grace to a benumbed and bewildered Heart, are a Resurrection from the Dead, and these are usually in their greatest Verdure after a Shower. O how green do the Herbs then look! and the withering Flowers lift up the Head: never so many Stars appear, nor with such a Lustre as in a frosty Night; and the bruised Spices have the greatest Fragrancy. The Children of God never shew forth his Praises more than in the House of Bondage, or the Land of their Pilgrimage. Our winter Weather makes us most warm at Heart: *As our outward Man perishes, our inward Man is renew'd day by day*, 2 Cor. 4. 16. and 2 Cor. 4. 11. the Apostle says, *We are deliver'd to Death for Jesus sake, that the Life also of Jesus might be manifest in our mortal Flesh*. Under our spiritual Declinings and Decays, we may then lift up the Head, and encourage our selves with Hope that the day of our Redemption and Recovery draweth nigh.

2. A more clear Revelation of God's special Love, may be expected at such a time. The Joys and Comforts of the Gospel are hung upon the Cross, where our blessed Saviour died; there Sin is nailed, which would destroy our Joy and Comfort, the Curse is vacated and Death vanquish'd by it: and there that Love which passes Knowledge, shews forth it self in open Sight; when in the Wilderness, there our tender and blessed Lord usually speaks comfortably to his People; when they most want it, and will most value it, there he will shew them his Loves.

The Child never knows so much of the Parents Hearts
and

and Bowels; as when it's sick and in distress; when every Look is Love, and every Word is Pity and Compassion. O the founding of Christ's Bowels then to his People! when cast out, persecuted, and trodden under foot of Men for his Name's sake.

Our Lord loves not to have his Love and Favour slighted; the full Soul loaths the Honey-comb. Thou hast, it may be, in the day of thy Prosperity, too many Lovers to give thy Lord a hearty welcome; he keeps his best Wine till all thy own be soured, at such a time he sees 'twill relish best, and then thou shalt not want it.

3. A more full Manifestation of Glory, a suffering State is usually accompany'd with. It's said of Stephen, the first Gospel-Martyr, Acts 7. 55. *He looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the Glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right Hand of God; and Chap. 6, ver. 15. All that sat in the Council saw his Face, as it had been the Face of an Angel.* Such an admirable Splendor and Serenity in his Countenance, as spake him rather an Angel than a Man. O what a Heaven was there within, that cast out such a divine and heavenly Lustre on his Face! When we read of those Armies of Martyrs that have gone before, of their unspeakable Joys, their undaunted Courage, their admirable Boldness, cheering their Friends, confounding their Enemies, their rejoicing in their Stripes, leaping in their Chains, kissing their Stakes, embracing the Flames, riding up in Triumph in their Charlots of Fire, not repenting of their Faith, nor accepting Deliverance; what does this speak, but that their Eyes and Hearts as well as their Anchores were within the Veil, whither Christ their Forerunner is gone before them? And such as these are the Sufferings of Christ, which he calls his Servants out into, this is their Portion under the sharpest Trials they can meet with. They have that which comprehends whatever they can desire or want, his Presence with them, which is all in all, in whom all Fulness dwells. This he has promis'd, Jer. 30. 11. *I am with thee to save thee:* and Isa. 43. 2. *When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee.* When the three Children were in the Furnace, the Son of God was with them: Isa,

172 *The Earth, with all Temporal Blessings.*

Iſa. 63. 9. In all their Afflictions he was afflicted, he ſav'd them by the Angel of his Preſence, &c. He is ever with his People to bear their Burdens, to plead their Cauſe, to waſh their Stripes, and wipe off their Tears; to bind up their broken Bones, and to revive their weary Spirits; to lead them in their Wanderings, and to converſe with them in their Solitudes; to give down from above in divine Smiles, in Inſaples of ſpiritual Joys, Affurances of his deareſt Love, his tenderest Care, Sympathy, and moſt gracious Acceptance; to give down from above whatever is wanting beneath; to preſerve them from falling by the Preſence of his Grace, till he preſent them faultleſs before the Preſence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy.

O my Lord! let me live in thy Preſence, and feel thy Smiles upon my Heart; let me love thee, and tell me thou loveſt me, remembreſt, pitiest, accepteſt, and takeſt care for me; and then, bleſſed Lord, chuſe thou my Condition, my Dwelling and Entertainment for me. Art thou, Chriſtian, in this Covenant? then open thy Eyes, read over all the ſweet and gracious Promiſes in it; view over all the Inſtances of ſuffering Saints that have gone before thee, on whom theſe Promiſes have been made good, under their ſharpeſt Conflicts, Perſecutions, and Diſtreſſes; and know that *all theſe things are written for our Learning, that we thro Patience, and Comfort of the Scriptures, might have Hope.* Read over *Iſa. 51.* and remember the Promiſe, the Oath, and Covenant of thy God.

And whatever Condition we are in, in this our wilderneſs State in the World, as to the Enjoyments of it; whether we want or abound, whether we labour either for the ſupply, or for the continuance and maintenance of that Portion in theſe things here, which the Lord has given us; or for a ſanctify'd Improvement of whatever we want, or loſe of Creature Comforts and Enjoyments, let us ſtill depend upon the Faithfulneſs of God's Covenant: we have his Promiſe, let us believe it, and from that take our Encouragement to reſt upon it; and then however all things may ſeem to make againſt us, yet his Promiſe will hold, it can never fail; his Word is ſure, it is a faithful ſaying, *The Lord will not forſake his People;* and what he hath ſpoken concerning all in general, he ſpeaks

The Angels of Light in the Covenant. 173

speaks to every one of his People in particular, that serve him faithfully; *I will not fail thee nor forsake thee;* compare Josh. 1. 5. with Heb. 13. 5.

C H A P. XIV.

The Angels of Light in the Covenant.

THE glorious and blessed Angels are in this Covenant.

Heb. 1. 14. *Are they not all ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation?*

Psal. 91. 11. *He shall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.* They have receiv'd a Charge from the Lord over every true Believer for his Security, and they have great Advantages for the faithful keeping of it. For,

1. They are mighty and powerful; Psal. 103. 20. *Bless the Lord, ye his Angels, that excel in Strength.* 185000 Assyrians were slain in a night by one Angel, when they were encamp'd against Judah; Isa. 37. 36.

2. They are numerous; Heb. 12. 22. *An innumerable Company of Angels.* And Luke 2. 13. they are call'd a *Multitude of the Heavenly Host.* And if an Angel is more than a whole Army of Men, what is a whole Army of Angels?

3. They are faithful in doing all this Work which God has appointed, and employs them in; Psal. 103. 20, 21.

4. They are Favourites, they behold the Face of God, and stand in his presence; they have Favour in Heaven, and therefore such Power on Earth: Mat. 18. 10.

All which speaks the great Security of God's Children: These Mighty ones, these Multitudes, these Faithful ones, that are Favourites of Heaven, the holy Angels of God, have all receiv'd a Charge from him to preserve and defend his People: 2 Kings 6. 17. The highest Angel is not exempted from this Office: *Are they not all ministring Spirits?* The word signifies a Messenger, as if they were ever employ'd in Errands betwixt Heaven and Earth. They are ever *hearkening to*
and

274 *The Angels of Light in the Covenant.*

and obeying the Voice of the Lord; beholding his Face, and celebrating his Praises; and in respect of his Saints and Servants whilst here on earth, they are continually doing them Offices of Love, and are appointed of God to be as a Guard about them, to comfort and defend them, and give an happy Success in their lawful Employments; to stir up good ~~Motions~~ ^{Movements} in their Hearts, to comfort them in their Sorrows, as our Blessed Lord himself was comforted, being distressed in Soul, *Luke 22. 43, 44* and as Paul was, *Acts 27. 23, &c.* to preserve from Danger of every kind, to which we are subject while in the World; and not only the Saints themselves, but all that is theirs, their Goods, Wife, Children, and Families, are under their Guardianship and Protection. And as the Body, so also their Souls are under their Care; by which they are frequently kept from the Evils of Sin, by their continual Presence and Power. And lastly, they are said to carry their Souls, being separated from the Body, with Comfort to Heaven; and will wait upon Christ at the Day of Judgment, to gather all the Faithful unto him, to separate the Wicked from among them, and rejoice at the Sentence which he shall give. See this, and more largely of the Ministration of Angels, in the Reverend Bishop *Usher's* Body of Divinity, and in Mr. *Ambrose's* Works.

They must not exercise a Dominion over them, they must not exact Adoration or Worship from them; but his elect and chosen Servants are so precious in his sight, that they are commanded to preserve, defend, deliver, and keep them.

But then the keeping of Saints is limited to their Ways: *They shall keep thee in all thy ways*, i. e. in all their necessary lawful ways, not in their sinful and wandering Deviations. The Issue of this Ministration of Angels over the People of God, is Safety and Security: *Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.* By this one Danger may be understood all other Dangers; *q. d.* Not any Hurt, be it ever so little, shall befall the Children of God: so far shall they be from harm in the Head, that it shall not reach the Foot; neither Foot, nor Head, nor a Hair of their Head shall perish to their prejudice: *Luke 21. 18.* As Nurses and Mothers deal with their Children, so must the Angels deal with the Children of God;

The Angels of Light in the Covenant. 175

God; i. e. they must keep them in their Ways, they must bear them up in their hands, they must carry them as in arms, lest they dash their Feet against the stones. *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them; Psal. 34. 7.* When the young Man had his Eyes open'd at *Elisha's* Prayer, he saw the Mountain was full of Horses and Chariots of Fire round about *Elisha*; *2 Kings 6. 17.* So many military Services are they ever and anon performing for the Saints and Servants of God! They are watchful Centinels, giving a timely alarm to prevent the Enemy; *Mat. 2. 13.* They are faithful Life-Guards, preserving them in the midst of Dangers, that no Evil befall them; *Psal. 91. 10, 11.* And they are safe Convoys, bringing them thro this Wilderness to their heavenly Canaan; of which *Jacob* had experience in the Type, *Gen. 32. 1, 3.*

And what reason can be given why it should be thus, but that it is the Lord's Will and Pleasure it should be so? *He worketh all things after the Counsel of his Will.*

(2.) It is his Command they should so minister: hence he is call'd *the Lord of Hosts.* As Commanders say to their Soldiers, Go, and they go; so does the Lord to his Angels, Go, and they go; Go and minister to my Saints, and they obey him.

(3.) It is his great Goodness that they should so minister. Alas! if the Lord should deal with us according to our Demerits, rather Tygers and Dragons should wait upon us, than the Angels. It's more than we can challenge, that any Creature, since the Fall, should be serviceable to us; but that all the Host of Heaven should be abas'd to so low a work, as to be sent forth to minister for the meanest Saint, even for us poor sinful Wretches, Dust and Ashes, O what Goodness is this! Upon this account of the Love, Mercy, and Goodness of God, we read so often of the Lord's sending his Angels to attend his Saints that were in Covenant with him. Thus *Abraham* told his Servant, *The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his Angel with thee.* And *Daniel* told the King, *My God hath sent his Angel, and hath shut the Lions mouths, that they have not hurt me.* So gracious is the King of Heaven, that he will spare his own Cour-tiers out of Heaven, and send them on Errands to his Saints

176 *The Angels of Light in the Covenant.*

Saints and Servants here for their Preservation : whence holy *David* reasons, *O taste and see that the Lord is good!*

Farther, in respect to the Angels themselves, as it is the Duty of the most glorious Angels to be subordinate to God, and to act and move as he appoints, *to do his Pleasure*, which is the very Image of true Obedience ; for his Pleasure being in the Welfare and Prosperity of his Servants, as they know, they stand not upon terms with God, all they do, is but *to hearken to the Voice of his Word*, and then they fly, with haste, to do his Pleasure.

2. It is their Delight thus to attend the Servants of God : they know that one day they shall live together, and sing and rejoice together ; that the Saints shall supply the room of the fallen Angels : it is in the mean time their Desire and Delight to attend the Partners of their heavenly Joys. They are acquainted with God's Design and Purpose to save them, they know what Christ has done and suffer'd for them ; and are so delighted in, and ravish'd at this blessed Work of our Redemption, that they are ever ready with great delight to attend the Redeemed ones of Christ.

And in respect to the Saints and Servants of God themselves, it is for their Consolation ; and *he that spared not his own Son, how shall he not with him give them freely all other things*, that are for their good and advantage ? A mighty Comfort it is, that other Creatures should do them service ; that Heaven and Earth, and all that is in them, should be made for them, and be continu'd for their sakes : and yet as if all this were not enough, that Creatures of the highest Order, and finest Make, who behold the Face of God himself, and are taken up with the immediate Enjoyment of his Fulness, that even they should be appointed by Christ the King of Saints, to minister thus unto them. Indeed Reprobates and Unbelievers have none of this Comfort ; alas ! they are not within the Verge of this blessed Covenant, and therefore have nothing to do with these Promises and blessed Privileges of it : *it is for them*, and only them, *who shall be Heirs of Salvation*.

And as this is for the Comfort of God's Children, so it is for their great Benefit, both of Soul and Body. Some observe, that were it not for the Angels, the Devils that are ever seeking to devour, would quickly tear

all

The Angels of Light in the Covenant. 177

all the Bodies of the Saints into Atoms; as we read, before the Death of our Blessed Saviour, the Bodies of many that were possess'd were torn. But after the great Work of our Redemption, they were more restrain'd; *John* 12. 31. Yet he abides still in the World, and rules in the Air, and is continually seeking how he may ruin and destroy us. But blessed and adored for ever be that infinite Grace and Goodness, that hath appointed such a Ministration for us, that they cannot touch an hair to our hurt; and that not only our Bodies, but our Souls are likewise in their special Care. It is not to tell how many are the Benefits they administer with respect to them: they teach us Truths, they open God's Will, they reveal the Secrets and Mysteries of Grace, and by these means promote the Salvation of our Souls. In a secret unperceivable way they admonish our Minds, warn us of our Dangers and Wanderings, and persuade us, as the Vicegerents of our Lord and the Blessed Spirit, to the reading, hearing, and obeying of his Word. And O what Encouragement is this to Believers, to all that are in Covenant, that they are the proper Objects of the Angels Ministry! Whilst the Wicked and Unbelievers are left to the wide World, God has provided Tutors, and Governours, and Guardians for his Children. 'I know not (says the Reverend Mr. *Ambrose*, 'in his Treatise of *Communion with Angels*, p. 739.) the 'Condition that any Saint in the World may be in, 'wherein he cannot find in Scripture some encouragement or other drawn from this Ministry of the Angels. A worthy Author, as he adds, hath fram'd us 'the Variety of their Assistance of the Children of 'God in this following Scheme. "One
"while they lead us in our way, as they *Bp Hall in*
"did *Israel*; another while they instruct us, *his Invisible*
"as they did *Daniel*: one while they fight *World.*
"for us, as they did for *Joshua*; another
"while they purvey for us, as they did for *Elijah*: one
"while they fit us to our holy Vocation, as they did
"*Isaiah*; another while they dispose of the Oppor-
"tunities of our Calling for Good, as they did of *Phi-*
"*lip's* to the Eunuch: one while they foretel our Dan-
"gers, as to *Joseph* and *Mary*; another while they
"comfort us in our Afflictions, as they did *Christ* and

178 *The Angels of Light in the Covenant.*

“ his Apostles: one while they resist our offensive Cour-
 “ ses, as they did *Moses*; another while they encourage
 “ us in our Devotions, as they did *Paul*: one while
 “ they deliver us from Durance, as they did *Peter*;
 “ another while they preserve us from Death, as the
 “ three Childen: one while they restrain our Presump-
 “ tion, as the Cherub before the Gate of Paradise; ano-
 “ ther while they excite our Courage, as to *Joshua*, *Gi-*
 “ *deon*, and the other Judges: one while they cure our
 “ Bodies, as at the Pool of *Bethesda*; another while
 “ they carry up the Souls of God’s Children to Heaven,
 “ as they did to *Lazarus*. It were endless to instance,
 “ says he, in all the gracious Offices which the Angels
 “ perform.” And is not here great encouragement to all
 Saints? The Children of Princes are not without their
 Guard, no more are God’s Children; as they have an
 heavenly Father, so they have an heavenly Guard to
 wait upon them, and to minister unto them. Should a
 mighty and powerful Prince commit any Subject of his
 to a potent and powerful Life-guard, with such a Charge,
 “ Look to this Man, keep him in Safety, see that he
 “ come to no harm; whoever offends him, do you de-
 “ fend him; wherever he goes, go you with him;
 “ wherever he lodges, stand you as a Guard about the
 “ House; while he sleeps, do you watch; see that he
 “ want for nothing, nor any hurt come to him:” if
 this were our Case, in what great Security should we
 count our selves? But what is a Life-guard of frail Men
 to a Guard of mighty Angels? *Fear not, little Flock,*
 in Heaven your Angels behold the Face of God, and in
 Earth they have, by his gracious Will and Appointment,
 pitch’d their Tents round about you.

And how may this cause the Saints and Servants of
 God that are in Covenant with him, to admire at the
 Kindness of the Lord towards them! That the most
 glorious of his Creatures should wait on sinful Wretches,
 Dust and Ashes, Worms and not Men, it is enough to
 cast us into Amazement and Astonishment. A wonder
 it is, that any Creature, tho’ inferiour, should be ser-
 viceable to Man, that by Sin hath lost his Dominion
 over the Creatures: It was a wonder that the Ravens
 should minister unto *Elijah*; but that all the Host of
 Heaven should be abas’d (if we may speak after the
 manner

The Angels of Light in the Covenant. 179

manner of Men) to so low a Work, that Angels should perform Offices of Respect to the meanest Creatures, let us stand and wonder at this; being the Effect of that mystical Union to Christ, which the Saints and People of God, being restor'd again to his Image, are taken into. There is somewhat in Holiness more than the World sees or knoweth, and in that Relation to Christ which intitles his Members to so great a Privilege. Let Believers then, the Children of the Covenant, and the Promises contain'd in it, take an holy State upon them; think your selves too good to abase your selves to the World, or to Sin, or to be the Slaves of Men. If others mind the Earth and earthly things, as the Swine that follow the Trough, and can look no higher, yet let the Saints (whom the Angels wait on) walk above the World, and above all things that are here below. Entangle not your selves with the things of Earth, seek not your Rest and Happiness here, as if you had no better Portion. You who are marry'd to Christ, and united to him, and living Members of his mystical Body, you are made by that Relation to him spiritual Kings and Queens of a better Kingdom than this World: You have God's Testimonies for your Counsel, *Psal. 119. 24.* and the Privilege of a Guard that is full of State and Strength, God's holy Angels. O how should this greatnessen your Spirits! *Let the Saints be joyful in Glory, let them sing aloud upon their Beds, let the high Praises of God be in their mouths, and a two-edged Sword in their hand, to execute Vengeance upon the Heathen:* at whose command (when it is for their benefit and advantage) is a Legion of Angels. *This Honour have all the Saints.*

C H A P. XV.

Victory over Satan, and all the Powers of Darknefs.

THE Powers of Darknefs are deliver'd over in the Covenant; Satan and all his Instruments, to whom we are naturally in bondage, *held captive by him at his will*, 2 Tim. 2. 26. his Prisoners, Slaves, and Vassals. Amongst Men, Princes in the World rule only in some parts of it, but Satan rules over all the Earth: hence sometimes he is call'd the Prince of this World, and sometimes the God of this World. He is truly call'd the Prince of the World, as it is corrupted: When the World departed from God to his Adversary, God in justice gave Satan leave to prevail and rule in the Sons of Disobedience; and those Apostate Spirits are clothed and filled with a mighty Power, which they carry on for the advancement of their Kingdom of Darknefs, by tempting, seducing, and doing all the mischief that they can to the Sons of Men. Immediately after the Fall of our first Parents, they began their Rule, and while the World stands will continue it, under the Restraints of the Divine and Almighty Power, in whose hand they are. Satan having fallen himself from his first Station and primitive Purity which he was created in, into the lowest Depth of Sin and Misery, Apostacy from and Enmity to the blessed God; he is now become an enraged Enemy unto all his Creatures, as full of Malice as he is of Power, seeking to make the whole Creation as miserable as himself: and his Rage and Malice will continue, till the World it self shall be at an end; and then he shall be degraded, his Crown taken off, his Sword broken over his own Head, and he himself become a close Prisoner in Hell. He hath his Name [*the Wicked One*] to denote his spiteful and malicious Nature; he cannot endure that the Souls of Men should fare any better than himself, and therefore makes it his trade, his delight, his main work to destroy them: *He goes about*

about as a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour; 1 Pet. 5. 8. They are not an Arm of Flesh only that thus set themselves against us, and are continually seeking to destroy us; but they are spiritual Substances, that can reach our Spirits, that are carrying on this War against us, that know how to intice or to fight with us at all times, in all conditions, in all postures, whether we are alone or in company, idle or employ'd, sleeping or waking; they can and do fight invisibly, when we cannot see them: they are call'd *spiritual Wickednesses*, provoking to Wickedness of a spiritual nature, whose great design is not only to draw to gross and fleshly Sins, but to such as are of a more spiritual nature; such as Pride, Unbelief, &c. And as black as these hellish Spirits are, they can lay their wicked Designs so deep, as to appear like Angels of Light, and accordingly suit their Temptations of the finest Make. And all this Subtily, Art, and Power is employ'd, not for earthly, but heavenly things, that they might deprive us of our greatest Good: they would if they could, by all their Stratagems, Endeavours, and Temptations, bereave us of our God, our Saviour, our Sanctifier, of all our Hopes of Salvation, and of the Fruition of eternal Glory.

But now by *the Blood of the Covenant*, the Lord hath brought forth his Prisoners, and redeem'd his Captives, Zech. 9. 11. He hath spoil'd Principalities and Powers, and has led Captivity captive. In this Covenant there is not only Deliverance from them, but a Delivery over of them, by whom they were held. The God of this World, especially with respect to Believers, to all the Children of God, is bound in Chains, limited, spoil'd, banish'd, and cast out. Mat. 16. 18. The Church of Christ is built upon such a Rock, as that *the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it*. That whole infernal Corporation, Satan and all his Instruments, the Serpent and all his Seed, their Power and Policy, the Combination and Counsels of the Devil and his whole Party shall not be able to prevail, neither against the Head, nor any Member of his Church. They shall indeed fight against it, they are all combin'd, and list'd to make war upon it: *Raze it, raze it, even to the Foundation thereof*. Down with it! is the Language of Satan, and all the Members and Instruments of his infernal Kingdom; let it not have a

Being, or so much as a Name under Heaven. The Tails of those smoking Firebrands, tho perhaps sometimes at difference amongst themselves, yet join together, and are united against the Lord and his Anointed Ones; against their Profession, against Religion, and against the Soul of every Saint. And whatever Veils or specious Pretences the Instruments of Satan and his Servants may varnish their Quarrel with, this is it that lies at the bottom of all their Counsels and Machinations, and in which all their Aims are concentrated, to root out Godliness and the Professors of it out of the Earth, and to deceive and destroy Souls for ever. But in this the People of God may encourage themselves and rejoice;

1. That tho they shall fight against them, yet they shall not overcome and prevail. The Children of God, and his Church, in the end shall have the Victory: *Zech. 12. 3. Jerusalem shall be a burdensom Stone for all People.* It shall stand as a Rock, against which the impetuous Waves may dash themselves, but they can never move it. And,

2. They shall not be able to bear it, it shall crush them *that burden themselves with it.* Those that shake the Church of Christ, are pulling an House upon their own Heads, a Rock upon their own Loins; it shall break the Backs of those that contend against it, and *cut them in pieces, tho all the Earth, and Hell too, be gather'd together against it.* *Psal. 2. 1. Why do the Heathen rage, and the People imagine a vain thing? &c. Ver. 9. Thou shalt break them with a Rod of Iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a Potter's Vessel.* In the first Dawning of this glorious Day-light it's promis'd, that the Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpent's Head; *I will put Enmity, &c. Gen. 3. 15. & John 12. 31. it's said, Now is the Judgment of this World, now shall the Prince of this World be cast out.* Cast out of his Kingdom, from his Throne and Dominion; the Prey is taken from the Strong, and the Captives of the Mighty are taken away. The Son of God was manifested for this end, that Satan should prevail no more against his People.

Obj. Doth not Satan still reign? Is he not call'd the Prince of the Power of the Air, and the God of this World? And what Tyranny doth he exercise yet over God's Children? How doth he entangle and ensnare them?

them? What a strong Party hath he still within them, bearing Arms against their Lord, and fighting against the Souls of his People? What spoil does he make upon their Grace and Peace! Whence is it, that some of the Saints and Servants of God that are dear to him, are so winnow'd, disquieted, and vexed by him, that they cannot pray, nor read, nor scarce spend a Thought or cast a Look toward Heaven, but Satan stands by to resist and hinder them; which makes them mourn, and groan, and travail in pain, sighing and waiting for their Deliverance and Redemption?

Answ. Why tho he is still permitted, for wise and gracious Ends and Purposes, sometimes thus to disquiet and disturb the Children of God; yet his Head is broken, he hath receiv'd his Judgment, and he will in due time be trodden under their feet. The Blow he level'd at our Lord, and which he is now levelling against his Members, has already, and shall rebound upon his own head. He is bound in Chains, and must ask leave of your Father, e'er he can touch one Hair of your Heads; he cannot tempt, nor cast a Bank against you, nor shoot an Arrow without a Commission from Heaven: *Luke 10. 17. The Devils are subject to you.* He is cast out, and in your Lord's name you may cast him out; you may be Instruments to bring many Souls to Repentance, that they may recover themselves out of the Snare of the Devil, who are yet held captive by him at his will.

And tho he be an Adversary still, yet he is such an Adversary as may be resisted; *1 Pet. 5. 9. Whom resist stedfast in the Faith.* And if you will resist, he shall flee from you, *Jam. 4. 17.* Stand, and your Enemy runs: nay more, he is not only a conquer'd Enemy, but he is made your Servant; this Viper now shall yield a Medicine against his own Poison: his Messengers he sends to buffet you, his Thorns he sticks in your Flesh, shall be, by the wise Appointment of your gracious Father, a means of preventing greater Evils. The very Destruction he intends to bring upon you, shall promote your Salvation; *1 Cor. 5. 5.* The Devil is now become the Church's Servant, and such a Servant as in their present state they cannot well want. The Executioner of their Censures, the Destroyer (tho much against his Mind) is now become the Destroyer of Sin, that would undo us; he's made

to kill his own Party within us, which otherwise would kill the Soul. His Winds shall blow off your Chaff, his Floods shall wash away your Filth, his Earthquakes shall open your Prison-doors, and his Tempest drive you to your Harbour.

What great Encouragement then have Christians to stand their ground that are engag'd in this spiritual Combat; 'tis call'd *a wrestling*, which calls for our utmost Strength and greatest Vigour: *Satan as a roaring Lyon, goes about seeking whom he may devour*; and we need a strength above our own, which we are encouraged and commanded to lay hold upon; *Eph. 6. 10.* This Fight is often close and violent; Satan has thousands and ten thousands of Stratagems and Wiles, moulded by long Experience, Malice, and Subtilty, whereby he is always seeking to deceive us; he is a Spirit, and as such, his Work lies chiefly within, he takes hold upon our Spirits and Hearts: and therefore what need have we to hasten to our Fortrefs? that we may say of the Lord, *He is my Refuge, and my Fortrefs, my God, in him will I trust; he that dwelleth in the secret Place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty*, *Ps. 91. 1, 2.* The Lord himself then takes our part if we become his Covenant-Servants, he will stand by us with his Aid, and for our Relief, who is the Captain of the Salvation of his People; and if we call upon him at our need, we may be assur'd he will never leave us, fail, nor forsake us. One rightly

Gurnal's observes, that the Christian, of all Men, needs Christian Courage, and that a cowardly Spirit is beneath the lowest Duty of a Christian: Except thou canst prove thy Pedegree, says he, by an heroick Spirit; except thou wilt dare to be Holy in spite both of Men and Devils, never think that thou art begotten of God. O how uncomely a Sight is it, a bold Sinner and a fearful Saint! One resolv'd to be wicked, and a Christian wavering in his holy Course! To see Hell keep the Field, impudently braving it with display'd Banners of open Prophaneness, and Saints to hide their Colours for shame, or to run from them for fear! When *Joshua* was to march before *Israel* into *Canaan*, the Lord rais'd up his Spirit with redoubled Words, *Be strong and of a good Courage; only be thou strong and very courageous — Have not I commanded thee? be strong and of*

a good Courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismay'd, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest : Jos. 1. 6, 7, 9. Let us all say this to our selves, who are to march thro this Wilderness into the Heavenly Canaan, Let us take Courage, for the Lord our God is with us. A weak *David* need not fear to wrestle with *Goliath*, so long as *the Battel is the Lord's*, and that *he come* into the Field, and engages in this spiritual Warfare, in *the name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel*. Let us stretch forth our Arms, resist with all our might these powerful and furious Enemies of our Souls, and they will fall before us; resist them, and they will fly from us. Consider,

1. There is a Necessity for it : We were in our Baptism list'd and engag'd hereunto. Believers in this militant State, must either wrestle with these Enemies of their Souls, or be taken captive by them ; there is no middle Course.

2. The Victory is certain if we will but wrestle ; Satan is a foiled Adversary, Christ has overcome him already for us, and so shall we, if we will but valiantly enter in Christ's Name into the Lists.

3. The sweetness of Victory will abundantly recompence all the labour and trouble of our wrestling : We mistakingly reckon both upon the sweetness of Sin, and the trouble of resisting and wrestling against it ; but the right comparison is, between the fruit of Sin and the fruit of Victory.

4. The Cause is just ; the Lord himself hath proclaim'd it by his Heralds, *Eph. 6. 10, 11. Jam. 4. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8.* We have a lawful Authority, the Lord himself calls us to it, and engages us in this spiritual War. The Justice of our Cause is also manifest, in that Satan assaulting any of the Children of God, is a meer Usurper, he has no right over us ; we are not his, but the Lord's, by Creation, by Redemption, and by special Dedication : And it is the Defence of our own Souls, and the Dominion of God and Christ in us and over us, that we are call'd and bound unto.

5. We have already in our Baptism taken a military Sacrament, and therein promis'd that we will continue God's faithful Soldiers unto our lives end.

Farther, the Lord measures out our Temptations, weigheth our Strength, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able ; he giveth Shoulders, and fitteth

reth the Burden to them: this is his Promise, 1 Cor. 10. 13. *There has no Temptation taken you, but such as is common to Man; but God is Faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* The Lord hath promis'd his presence with us, to weaken our Enemies, and to supply us with Strength, and hath made great and precious Promises not only of Victory, but of Life, a Crown of Life, to those that thus wrestle in his Strength; to such there will follow a Day of Triumph, when all those Enemies that now assault and disturb, shall lie dead (as it were) before us, and we shall see them again no more for ever: We have now assurance of the total and final overthrow of this Adversary, Rom. 16. 20. and Rev. 20. 10. and 'tis but a little while that when he shall have done his work, he shall be sent to his Place, where he shall be shut-up and come out no more for ever. He shall tempt no more, vex, deceive, destroy, and torment us no more, but this Tormenter shall be then himself tormented to all Eternity.

Let us then who are the lifted and boarded Servants of our blessed Lord, whose Banner we now fight under, but stand our ground a little while; let us follow our Work, hold up our holy Profession, and hold on in our holy Course, keep our Hearts and our Garments; let us keep on our Armour, keep under Corruption, resist Temptations with Courage, and bear our Afflictions with Patience; resist and fight against our spiritual Adversaries, and watch with our Lord this one Hour: and *he that shall come will come, he cometh quickly*; and the Prince of this World, and all his wicked Instruments with him, shall be consum'd with the Breath of his Mouth, and be destroy'd for ever with the Brightness of his Appearing: he shall be cast out, he shall be cast down, and shall rise no more for ever.

C H A P. XVI.

Victory over Death in the Covenant.

GOD hath also given us in the Covenant the Victory over this last Enemy, Death: 1 Cor. 3. 22. *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the World, or Life, or Death, all are yours.* Death that is to others the King of Terrors, is now become of great advantage to the People of God: Phil. 1. 21. *To die is Gain.* For,

1. The Commiſſion of Death is chang'd; that which to the Wicked is an Inlet into everlaſting Miſery, is now to the Saints and Servants of God, all thoſe that are in Covenant with him, an Entrance into their Maſter's Joy. Death doth but take the Bride when ſhe is ready, and lodges her in the Chamber of the Bridegroom. This made Death the Apoſtle's Deſire, Phil. 1. 23. *I deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.*

2. Death is conquer'd, it is diſarm'd, and has now loſt its ſting; it is a conquer'd Enemy, and made tributary to Believers. When a Serpent has loſt its Sting, you may take it into your Boſom; ſo the Sting of Death being taken out, it is made very ſerviceable and uſeful to us. He that can ſay (from his Intereſt in this Covenant) *Death, where is thy Sting?* may well go on and add, *Thanks be to God, which hath given me the Victory thro' our Bleſſed Redeemer, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* A Signet ſent from Heaven with a Death's Head, is a moſt valuable and precious Token: Let Chriſtians then be of good courage at the approach of it, and ſet their feet on the neck of this King of Terrors.

3. Death is at once the Deſtruction of all our other Enemies. When once Death has done its Office upon us (if we are real Members of Chriſt) then farewel all the ſpiritual Enemies of our Souls for ever; farewel then the pricking Briar, and the grieving Thorn; then farewel Sin and Sorrow for ever. Thoſe curſed *Ama- lekites*, thoſe *Egyptians* they have ſeen, and been ſo much afraid of, and have felt to-day, they ſhall never ſee

188 *Victory over Death in the Covenant.*

see again for ever. This that in some respects may be call'd an Enemy, being the last that is to be subdu'd for us, destroys it self by destroying us. It has its Welcome and Farewel the same moment; it is but Welcome Death, and Farewel Death for ever: *Mortality is swallow'd up of Life, Death is cast into the Lake of Fire*; where they die, and die, and die again, over and over, are ever dying, and yet never dead: but for the Saints, it doth but set them on the Banks of that good Land, from which it must itself be for ever banish'd. Our blessed Lord by Death (both by his own and theirs) hath deliver'd those who thro Fear of Death were all their lifetime subject to Bondage.

With how much Patience then may Christians expect the Assault of this King of Terrors! Shall all Tribulation of every kind, Persecution, Famine and Nakedness, Peril and Sword, Sorrows and Fears, and Mortality it self die with me? Shall my Sin and Corruption also die, never to rise again for ever? Then welcome Death: Lord strengthen me, and let me die with the *Philistines*. Would it be good for us, as sure it would, to be for ever in the presence of our heavenly Father, in the Bosom of our dearest Lord and Bridegroom, in his Presence for ever, who is the Object of our dearest Love? Would it be a Mercy to us to weep no more, to suffer no more, to be tempted no more, and to sin no more for ever, to be uncloth'd of Corruption, and to be cloth'd upon with Immortality and Incorruption? then bid Death welcome, coming on such an Errand to us.

When blessed Souls shall come ashore, and see the Light, the Love, the Joy, the Rest and Glory that is on the other side; they will then more fully understand the Meaning of the Apostle's words, that *Death is yours*. Those blessed Foretastes which some Saints and Servants of God have had, before their Breath has left their Bodies, have made them thus express themselves: "I cannot tell you what sweet Pain, and delightful Torments, are in Christ's Love; I often challenge Time, that holdeth us asunder. I have for the present a sick Life, much Pain, and much Love-sickness for Christ; O what would I give to have a Bed made to my weary'd Soul in his Bosom! O when shall we meet! O

" how

Victory over Death in the Covenant. 189

“ how long is it to the Dawning of the Marriage-day !
“ O sweet Lord Jesus, take wide steps ; come over the
“ Mountains at one stride. O my Beloved, flee as a
“ Roe or a young Hart upon the Mountains of Sepa-
“ ration ! O if he would fold the Heavens together,
“ and shovel Time and Days out of the way, and come
“ away ! O why are his Chariot-Wheels so long a
“ coming ! ” Another excellent and holy
Person, who died before he was 24 Years of *Mr. J. Jane-*
Age, had such Breathing after Heaven and way.
Glory, that when he had some intimation of
Death approaching, he counted it the highest Act of Pa-
tience to be willing to live, and a great pitch of Self-
denial to be contented to be in this World, and to dwell
on this side a full and eternal Enjoyment of that holy
God, whom his Soul was so much in love with : he had
vehement and most earnest Desires to be dissolv’d, and
to be with Christ. “ O, said he, that I could shew you
“ what I see, and let you know what I now feel ! that
“ I could but express the thousandth part of that Sweet-
“ ness that now I find in Christ ! you would all then
“ think it worth the while to make it your business to
“ be religious. I would not for a World, nay, for a
“ million of Worlds, be now without a *Christ* : I would
“ not for a World live any longer ; the very Thought
“ of a Possibility to recover, makes me tremble. The
“ World hath quite lost its Excellency, in my Judg-
“ ment : O how poor and contemptible a thing is it in
“ all its Glory, compar’d with the Glory of that in-
“ visible World, which I now live in the sight of ! I
“ do so long to be with Christ, that I could be content
“ to be cut in pieces, and to be put to the most ex-
“ quisite Torments, so I might but die, and be with
“ Christ. Death hath lost its Terribleness, it is no-
“ thing (thro Grace) to me : I can as easily die as
“ shut my Eyes, or turn my Head and sleep. I long to
“ be with Christ, I long to die.” And to his Relations
he said, “ I am afraid of your Prayers, lest they should
“ pull one way, and mine another. O pray not for my
“ Life, you do me wrong if you do. O did you but
“ see what I see, you would all cry out with me, How
“ long, dear Lord ! Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.
“ O

190 *The Kingdom of Glory in the Covenant.*

" O how glorious is the blessed Jesus ! How shall I do
 " to speak the thousandth part of his Praises ? He is
 " sweet, he is altogether lovely. If I were never to
 " enjoy more than this Manifestation of his rich and glo-
 " rious Grace and Love, yet it were well worth all the
 " Torments that Men and Devils could invent, to come
 " through even an Hell to such unspeakable Joys as
 " these. If this be dying, dying is sweet : let no true
 " Christian ever be afraid of dying. O Death is sweet
 " to me ! This Bed is soft ! Christ's Arms and Kisses,
 " his Smiles and Visits, sure they would turn Hell into
 " Heaven. O that you did but see and feel what I do !
 " Come and behold a dying Man more chearful than
 " you ever saw any healthful Man in the midst of his
 " sweetest Enjoyments ! O Sirs, worldly Pleasures are
 " poor, pitiful, sorry things, compar'd with one Glimpse
 " of this Glory, which shines so strongly into my Soul !
 " O why should any of you be so sad ? This, this is
 " the Hour that I have waited for."

C H A P. XVII.

The Kingdom of Glory in the Covenant.

Lastly, **A**S the Top-stone and Sum of all those Blessings, which the Lord hath been pleas'd to make over to his People, to enrich his Saints and faithful Servants with, while they are here in this imperfect State ; and that they might be made compleatly happy and blessed in the full and everlasting Fruition and Enjoyment of himself in Glory, when they shall be fitted and prepar'd for it : he hath made over the Kingdom, and assur'd that to them in this Covenant ; *Mat. 5. 3. Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. Luke 12. 32. It is your Father's Good-pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* Here Christians walk by Faith, and not by Sight, whilst they live in the World ; and such are truly blessed and in a happy Condition, that do so : such have little reason to envy the highest and most exalted State of Worldlings, that have their Portions only in it. But that
State

The Kingdom of Glory in the Covenant. 191

State of perfect Happiness which they are appointed to, and which here they are only fitting and preparing for, they will be admitted into immediately upon their departing out of the World. The Work of Grace that is wrought in the Hearts of Believers here, is but an Earnest of that Glory that is preparing and reserv'd for them, and which they shall hereafter be made Partakers of, when their Sanctification shall be perfected. When they are made perfectly holy, then they shall be perfectly happy. They carry a corrupt Nature about with them whilst they are here in the World, which they cannot get rid of. Tho the Guilt of Sin be taken away in their Justification, and the Dominion of Sin be overthrown in their Sanctification, yet something of it still cleaves to them; which gives them much disturbance, and is a hindrance to them in the Service of God, under which they sometimes mourn and groan: But when Death shall separate the Soul and Body, the finishing stroke shall then be given, the Body of Death shall be laid aside, and the Sin that did so easily beset them shall be shaken off for ever. Flesh and Sin shall be laid down together, they shall be perfectly freed from all the Stains and Fetters of it, and fitted for a more delightful Communion with God and Christ, than they were capable of here in this World. They are in some measure conform'd to them already, and made Partakers of a Divine Nature; they are renew'd in Knowledge after the Image of him that created them, and are growing up more and more into a Conformity to him: but here that Work is imperfect, *they know but in part, 1 John 3. 3. and love but in part*; but when Grace shall be advanc'd to its highest Perfection, when they shall be made perfect in Holiness, then that which is in part shall be done away. They are now the Sons of God, and therein assur'd of being perfectly happy and blessed hereafter; but then they shall be brought into the full Possession and Enjoyment of that Happiness, when they are brought into a perfect Conformity to him, and shall see him as he is: *1 John 3. 2.* They shall then be taken up in the everlasting Admiration and Enjoyment of him, and admitted into the most desirable Society of glorious Angels, and *the Spirits of Just Men made perfect.* They shall then be employ'd in contemplating with the highest Admi-

192 *The Kingdom of Glory in the Covenant.*

Admiration all the Works of God, and Wonders of Divine Love; particularly those of our Redemption and Salvation, for which an Eternity will not be thought too long to admire and praise him in. And that which will render the Happiness and Blessedness of the Saints more compleat and perfect, will be the Duration and Eternity of it. It is *an eternal Weight of Glory, that fadeth not away*; 1 Pet. 1. 4. *Glorious things are spoken of this City of God*, Psal. 87. 3.

This is a Subject that might well deserve the most enlarged Thoughts to expatiate and dwell upon, when so much of that Blessedness and Delight (which Believers shall then be fully possess'd of) has been perceiv'd and felt by some of God's faithful Servants and Children here, while in these Tabernacles of Flesh, and their embody'd state. But this being more enlarg'd upon in the Close of the third Part of this Treatise, I shall refer thereto for what remains to be spoken of it. And alas! how little can it be, and how unsutable to such a Subject, when the Pens and Tongues of Men and Angels shall, after all, come infinitely short in describing the Blessedness and Glory of that Kingdom! It must (when all is said that can be spoken or conceiv'd in the Description of it) be left within the Veil, being assur'd concerning it from the Mouth of that blessed Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *That Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entred into the Heart of Man to conceive, the things which God hath prepar'd for them that love him.* Here we know as thro a Glass darkly, but when by the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation the Eyes of our Understandings shall be opened, we shall then know more perfectly, what is the Hope of his Calling, and what is the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance in the Saints; Eph. 1. 18. Till we are past the Gates of Death, we can at best have but a Glimpse hereof, and that very imperfectly, till we shall be admitted to the beatifical Vision, the immediate Presence of the glorious God and our dear Redeemer, and to the immediate Fruition and Enjoyment of him. There will till then remain that *Visio recta*, the Sight of God face to face, in whose Presence is Fulness of Joy, and at whose right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore. When we shall know and behold, in the fullest measure that we shall then in our most perfect state be capable of,

of, that infinite Love, Beauty, and Excellency that shine forth in him, and all those adorable Perfections which so far transcend our highest and most perfect Knowledge or Conceptions here on Earth : to *know as we are known*. I shall conclude this with that divine Distich of the Reverend Mr. *Nath. Culverwel*, in the Close of a Discourse of his, call'd *Spiritual Opticks*, publish'd since his Death :

*What this [to know as we are known] should be,
The Author could not tell, but's gone to see.*

C H A P. XVIII.

Of the Terms of the Covenant.

AND now seeing the Lord hath been pleas'd in his infinite Grace and Mercy to condescend to make such a Covenant with his People, to give himself for their Portion, his Son for their Price and Ransom, his Holy and Blessed Spirit for their Guide in the way ; and with them all other Blessings, spiritual, temporal, and eternal, till Grace shall be consummate and swallow'd up in Glory, in that state of everlasting Happiness and Blessedness in his glorious Presence, which he hath secur'd to them in this Covenant : It remains now, that we consider what it is that the Lord expects from us, and what way it is he will have us found in, in order to his performing unto us the things which he hath promis'd. And that there is such a way of the Covenant, in which the Lord conveyeth his Blessings to his People, we may see in that Expression us'd by himself concerning *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 19. *I know Abraham (saith the Lord) that he will teach his Household, &c. that I may bring upon Abraham that which I have spoken unto him.* The Lord fully intended to do to *Abraham* as he had promis'd, but yet he will have *Abraham* to walk so and so before him ; and then he will bring upon *Abraham* the Blessings which he had promis'd. The like we have in *Jer.* 11. 5, 6.

Great are the Blessings which God has promis'd to those that are the faithful Seed of *Abraham* (all things that
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are really good for them) both for Time and Eternity; and as we desire to enjoy the Blessings promis'd, so we must see also what he requires of us, that he may perform unto us what he hath promis'd. And this is call'd sometimes the Stipulation or Condition of the Covenant, which is now to be spoken of.

And what doth the Lord require of us, in order to our receiving of these Covenant-Blessings, but Faith? *Rom. 4. 16. & Rom. 10. 9, 10. If thou believest in the Lord Jesus, thou shalt be saved. So John 3. 16. God so loved the World, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life. See also John 6. 29.* The Grace of Faith is that which interests us therein; which Grace containeth and carrieth in it a hearty and unfeigned receiving, embracing and consenting on our part to that Covenant, which is in all respects so greatly for our own benefit and advantage. Our closing by Faith with it, and a believing and thankful Acceptance of it upon Gospel-Terms (which the Promises of the Covenant, binding mutually, do import) is what is requir'd on our part. It being the transcendent Design of the blessed God, thro his infinite Grace, to reduce fallen Man into so near a Relation to himself; all the Persons of the Sacred Trinity act their peculiar parts in this blessed Contrivance, and a Line of Love runs thro the whole Transaction. God the Father, who humbleth himself to behold the things in Heaven and in the Earth, hath condescended so far as to become himself the Portion of his People. God the Son took on himself the Form of a Servant, and humbled himself even to Death, in order to the procuring and purchasing of it for us: and God the Holy Ghost makes particular Application to Souls of all that rich Grace that was in the Heart of the Father to bestow, and the Benefits which the Son hath purchas'd by his Blood. And this he doth by working the saving Grace of appropriating Faith, which puts the Christian into possession of all the Blessings of the Covenant. Hereby we do unfeignedly profess our selves to be no longer our own, or at our own dispose; but sincerely and without any reservation (consenting to forsake the World, the Flesh, and the Devil) we make a solemn Choice of God for our Portion and Blessedness, in all his personal

personal Relations and essential Perfections; and that we do accordingly resign and give up our selves to Him, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be all that to us, and to work all that in us which he hath so graciously undertaken to be and to do for us, in order to his own Glory, and our present and eternal Welfare and Happiness. And being we are in and of our selves empty and nothing Creatures, without Righteousness and Strength, or any thing that is truly good, and all our Duties are in themselves but as filthy Rags; this Grace of Faith comes with an empty hand, and fills the Soul, lays hold upon the Grace of God in Christ, and receives and embraces him who is our Life, that he may bring us to God. He is the Author and Finisher of our Faith, and the great Storehouse of all those Blessings that were the Purchase of his precious Blood, and in the eternal Purpose of the Father's Love to bestow upon us. *He that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life; 1 John 5. 12.* He is the Field in whom that inestimable Treasure of Covenant-Blessings is hid and laid up: *Mat. 13. 44.* It is in him that all those great and precious Promises of the Covenant are *Yea and Amen*, ratify'd and confirm'd to Believers. We are dead whilst we remain in our natural and unregenerate State, *Col. 3. 3.* and our Works are dead Works, the best of them, there is no Life in them; *Heb. 9. 14.* and they cannot bring Life unto them that do them; nor can we quicken our own Souls, but Christ is the Life of Men, *John 1. 4. Col. 3. 4.* And the way to receive Christ, and the Life which is in him, is only by Faith; *John 1. 12.* Unbelief rejects Christ, and puts him away; but Faith as an Hand puts forth it self to receive him in whom our Life is, and by this Grace of Faith the Soul is brought home to God: *Gal. 3. 26. We are all the Children of God by Faith in Christ Jesus.* By Faith we are justify'd, and by this Grace of Faith Christ dwells in the Hearts of Believers; *Gal. 3. 26. Eph. 3. 17.* As our Lord Jesus is the blessed Ligament to unite God and Man, so Faith is the Bond that joins Christ and the Soul, as receiving of him. He having discharg'd the Debt we were in to Divine Justice by Sin, Faith accepteth the Pardon, and pulls off the Seal from the cancell'd Bond. Christ having purchas'd all those Covenant-Blessings for Believers,

lievers, Faith receives them, and makes them our own, by a present legal Title, and eternal Possession.

The infinitely wise God chose this Grace of Faith to justify Sinners, as fittest to secure the Glory of his free Grace, it being that which excludes all Boasting in Man. The Lord saw by *Adam*, what would be the Fruit of the Condition of Works; if we had been put upon the same as *Adam* was, we should have done as he did; *like Men transgressing the Covenant*, as the Prophet *Hosea* speaks, *Hos. 6. 7.* Now that Condition being above our Ability to perform, the Lord hath in Mercy and Goodness appointed another; which is possible thro Grace to be fulfill'd by us: having receiv'd a *Spirit of Faith*, it is now given us *to believe*, *2 Cor. 4. 13.* *Phil. 1. 29.* He chose this Grace of Faith to stand so near him, as that with which he could best trust his Honour in the Justification of a Sinner. It honours God, and he is pleas'd to honour it; it makes us poor in our own sight, but rich in God, as it strips the Sinner of the impure Rags of his own Righteousness, and clothes him with the spotless Robes of the Righteousness of Christ. This is the Captain Grace, all other Graces militate under its Ensign: it overcomes the World, purifies the Heart, works by Love, and produceth Gospel-Repentance. It is that first Link in the golden Chain of Graces, to which the rest are ty'd. It is by Faith, that it might appear to be by Grace that we obtain the Blessing; and the Conditions answer the Nature of the Covenant, which is a Covenant of Grace, *Rom. 4. 16.* *That nothing might be left to Man to glory in, but that he that glorieth might glory in the Lord;* *1 Cor. 1. last.*

It is also by Faith, that the Blessing might be sure to all the Seed to whom it is promis'd, *Rom. 4. 16.* Christ is a sure Foundation for them to rest upon, *Isa. 28. 16.* The Promise in him is also sure, *2 Sam. 23. 5.* And Faith is an Anchor sure and stedfast: and this Grace of Faith fixing and taking such sure hold upon both, these three together are as *a threefold Cord not easily broken*, and that cannot fail; but convey to us (in and with Christ) all other Blessings of the Covenant, *Rom. 8. 32.* he being the *Author and Finisher* of this, and of all the other Graces of his Spirit in us; *Heb. 12. 2.* But now tho so great an Honour has been and is deservedly put upon
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this Grace of Faith, as we have heard, yet herein we must be exceedingly careful, not to ascribe any thing to it, as it is a Grace wrought and working in us, more than to any other Grace; but only as it is the Instrument whereby the Soul layeth hold on Christ the Object of it, who is our Life, and in whom all Fulness is treasur'd up and dwells: *Colos. 1. 19.* Hereby his Righteousness is made ours, and all the Blessings of the Covenant which he hath purchas'd, are made over to us in him, when by Faith we have embrac'd him.

Obj. But here we may object and say, If God in and by the Lord Jesus Christ has undertaken all this for us, what is there left on us to do? Soul, take thy ease and liberty, cast away Care, make much of thy Body, God will take care of the rest.

Ans. But is there nothing requir'd of us? Let the Scriptures speak: *Ezek. 36. 37. Yet for all this, saith the Lord, I will be inquir'd of, or sought unto, by the House of Israel, to do it for them:* otherwise they have no warrant to look for any such things. He that will not ask in Faith, let not that Man think he shall receive any thing of the Lord; *Jam. 1. 7.* And can he think to receive any thing, that neither believes nor prays? that prays not in Faith, nor prays at all? *Phil. 2. 12, 13. It is God that works in us* (the Apostle says) *both to will and to do:* And what follows? therefore sit still and do nothing? No; therefore *work out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling.* The Promise of God was never intended to make the Authority and Commands of God of no effect. God doth, in promising Grace, promise the Aids and Assistance of his Holy Spirit to enable us to Duty, and to give us strength to perform it; and as he doth not give, so we must not receive his Grace in vain. Whilst he gives, and has promis'd graciously to give what he requires of us, so he still requires also what he gives. That great and comprehensive Promise of God [*Ye shall be my People*] imports also our Duty; and tho' he undertake to make it good, yet this is likewise the matter of our Stipulation: and in this Promise, wherein the Lord assures his People what *de facto* we (shall) be, is included a Precept, wherein we may understand and see what *de jure* we (ought) to be.

In his Promise and Undertaking to give us a new Heart, a tender, and obedient, and a persevering Heart, &c. the Lord doth promise both to make us what we should be, and to help us in what we are bound to do in order to it: he gives us at once a clear hint both of our Mercy and Duty. This is the Sense and Sum of that great and comprehensive Promise of the Covenant, *Ye shall be my People*. As the Lord will work all that in us and for us, so he will help and cause us to perform that, by his Holy Spirit and Grace, which is requir'd of us unto Salvation. Thus the Promise on God's part is so far from making void the Duty and Obligation upon us to the faithful Performance on ours, that it is the greatest Motive and Encouragement to it. *Do we then make void the Law through Faith?* (saith the Apostle) *no, we establish the Law*; Rom. 3. 31. Tho it be certain as to the Event, that all that's necessary to Salvation shall be accomplish'd in us, God having undertaken *that*; yet it is altogether as certain, that he hath made our loving him, fearing him, obeying his whole Will sincerely and faithfully, and our Perseverance therein, so necessary, that we cannot expect Salvation in the neglect thereof.

Christians must not mistake nor abuse the Grace of the Gospel, which is in all respects so greatly to our own advantage: the Lord never intended our Mercy should make void our Obligation to Duty. Our Redemption from Sin was never intended as a Toleration of Sin, nor that his holy and sanctifying Spirit should be given in favour of the Flesh. Tit. 2. 11, 12. *The Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, teacheth us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World*. Tho we are saved by Grace, yet we are Debtors to the whole Law; Gal. 5. 3. Perfect Obedience to it, even to the utmost Iota, is still due from us; Jam. 2. 10. Mat. 5. 48. And if it be not in our Hearts to perform and pay all that we owe; that is, if there be any Duty commanded in the whole Book of God, that we must be dispens'd with, that we will not set our Hearts to observe and obey; if there be any one Sin that we must be excus'd in, and will not part with; if there be any, even the highest pitch of holy Care, Industry, Zeal for God and Holiness, that we will not be perswaded to press hard after:

after : this is an Evidence of such an unsound Heart, as hath at present no part in the Gospel, or the Salvation thereof. Mat. 5. 19. *Whoſoever ſhall break one of theſe leaſt Commandments, and ſhall teach Men ſo, ſhall be call'd leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven.* No leſs than Perfection is ſtill due, tho Sincerity will be accepted : But what is Sincerity, leſs than an hearty Willingneſs to be perfect, evidenc'd by a ſtriving and preſſing on towards that Mark of Perfection and Holineſs, which is ſet before us ?

O let us admire and bleſs the Lord for the amazing and wonderful Revelation and Diſcovery of his Grace in the Goſpel ! but let us be very careful we turn not the Grace of God into Licentiouſneſs : *Shall we continue in Sin, becauſe Grace hath abounded towards us ? Shall we thus requite the Lord,* and thereby deceive our own Souls ? Shall we ſlight him, becauſe he hath loved us ? Shake off his Yoke from us, becauſe he hath ſecur'd the Crown for us ; and ſerve his Enemies ſtill, becauſe he hath done ſo much to deliver and ſave us from them ? Shall we nourish the Diſeaſes of our Souls, becauſe he hath undertaken to heal and cure us of them ? This is as if we ſhould reſuſe to eat, becauſe we have Meat provided for us ; or to work and watch, becauſe the Lord has given us Hands and Eyes to work and watch withal : This would be to tempt him, inſtead of truſting in him.

Let us not therefore ſay, If God will, I ſhall, whether I take care or no, whether I believe or not, whether I repent and be obedient or not ; my Unbelief, my Diſobedience, and Negligence, ſhall not make the Faith of God of none effect : but rather, ſince God hath ſaid, *You ſhall,* let our Hearts answer, *We will* walk in his Statutes. Arife, O my Soul, up and be doing ; work out thy Salvation, becauſe *it's God,* a God of infinite Power and Goodneſs, *that worketh in thee to will and to do.* Shake off thy Sloth, ſet to thy Work, and run thy Race with Seriouſneſs and Diligence ; ſince God hath ſaid thou ſhalt not run, nor labour in vain. And look to it ; for however thy Negligence, or thy greateſt Unfaithfulneſs, will not make void the Covenant of God ; yet theſe may make it manifeſt, that as yet thou haſt no Part nor Lot in it.

Since therefore the Lord is pleas'd to deal thus graciously with us, to enter again into a Covenant, and ſuch

a Covenant now with us; let us break off the League with all his Enemies, and Rivals in our Hearts, that would not that he should reign over us: let nothing satisfy us without the Subduing, Death, and utter Destruction of them, to which we have been in bondage and subjection; the World, Satan, and all our Lusts, that have so long lorded it over us: and let us accept his Son for our Lord and Saviour, and submit ourselves accordingly to his Rule and Government. All that hath been mention'd, is comprehended in it, in a sincere and unfeigned Acceptance of the *Lord Jesus Christ*, wherein the vital Act of saving Faith (I conceive) doth consist: *John* 1. 12. compar'd with *Col.* 2. 6. In our receiving of Christ is imply'd a sincere and unfeigned Consent of Subjection to him, and Dependence upon him, as an all-sufficient Saviour, clothed with all those Offices which he hath undertaken on our behalf, of Prophet, Priest, and King, to save us from our Sins: *Mar.* 1. 21. *His Name shall be call'd Jesus, for he shall save his People from their Sins*; both from the Guilt and Power, and all Dominion and Abode of Sin. He is the promis'd Seed, who is sent into the World from the Father to bless us, in turning us away from our Iniquities, *Acts* 3. 26. If we consent to take him for that purpose, make him our Lord, and subject our selves to him to be his; when we yield a hearty and unfeigned Consent thus to take him as he is offer'd, a whole Christ, with our whole Hearts, then we are united to him, and in Covenant with him.

The Covenant of Grace is a Marriage-Covenant, which binds mutually, and lays us under the strictest Ties and Obligations to Faithfulness, Duty, and Subjection: *Hof.* 2. 19, 20. *2 Cor.* 11. 2. It is made over to us in such terms as these; "Thou shalt believe, thou shalt take my Son for thy Lord and Saviour, and thou shalt likewise receive the Gift of Righteousness, which was wrought by him for thy Sins, for a Reconciliation with me, and shalt thereupon grow up in Love and Obedience to me; thus I will be thy God, and thou shalt be my People." This is the Covenant of Grace. And tho there is nothing but this Grace of Faith that is the Instrument in the Lord's hand of bringing us into it, as before was said; yet this Believing brings with it, and

and works Sanctification and Holiness of Life : this necessarily will follow a true and saving Faith, and is therefore one of the greatest and best Evidences we can have of the Truth of it. Saving Faith is never alone ; for when by it we are ingrafted into Christ, he is become Bone of our Bone, and Flesh of our Flesh ; the very same Spirit dwells in a Believer, that dwells in him ; in him as the Head, and in us as the Members. Christ comes into our Hearts by his Spirit, reviving, quickening, and working a saving Change in us : and from this Union to him we derive all those vital Influences which carry on the Work of Faith in our Souls. As the Branch derives Sap from the Vine, so Believers ingrafted into Christ derive Life and spiritual Nourishment and Strength from him, for the mortifying and subduing of Sin in them. All the Graces and gracious Privileges, which we enjoy or can hope for here or hereafter ; all our Riches and Happiness are first in Christ our Head, and are deriv'd from Christ to us, by his Holy Spirit dwelling and abiding in us : *Eph. 1. 3, 4. 1 Cor. 3. 22, 23. John 17. 21, 22, 23.* All things are ours, because we are Christ's (being thus united to him) and Christ is God's ; and from that Fulness that is in him, Believers receive Grace for Grace. God is first the Father of Christ, and then our Father. Christ is that *Jacob's Ladder* that joins Heaven and Earth together : *John 20. 17.* He is the Head of his Church, first uniting them to himself, and then communicating all spiritual good things to them ; triumphing over all the spiritual Enemies of our Salvation, preparing Mansions for us against we die, and in the mean while making Intercession for us, until he hath brought us to the full Enjoyment of himself in Glory : *John 14. 2.*

As a Woman by marrying to a Husband is under Covert thereby, so Believers that are marry'd to Christ, have all their Debts discharg'd by him, and have also an Interest in all his Wealth, which is very large, as we have seen before in the Covenant of Grace ; all the Blessings which are contain'd therein being made over to them, that they may bring forth fruit unto God. Whilst the Creature rejoiceth in it self, and will stand on its own bottom, it continueth thereby divorc'd and separated from God, and cannot do any thing that is spiritually and truly good. But the true and lively Faith
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of a Believer will be operative, and putting forth it self in Acts of spiritual Life. As Nature is ever active in its kind, and as common Nature doth in natural Actions, so Principles of Grace produce the Actions of Grace. By being united to Christ, the Image of God is repair'd in them, and they have a new Sap which wears out the old Man and Body of Sin more and more in them, being ingrafted into the Similitude of Christ's Death and Resurrection. *Abraham* believing God to be an exceeding great Reward, a Sun and a Shield, left his Country, and all things, to cleave fast unto God. The Promises that were made to *Abraham* the Father of Believers, were made to Christ primitively and originally, who is the Seed that should bless all Nations. He hath the active part committed to him, but to *Abraham* and us they are derivative Promises in the passive part; and we shall have the Effect thereof, when we are by Faith become the Children of *Abraham*: All those great and precious Promises being *Yea and Amen* in Christ, are made over to Believers in this Gospel-Covenant.

But farther, in this great Transaction in making up the Covenant between God and us, and that which takes away all matter of boasting in our selves, is, that God is first with us: He is the first Mover in it, he begins with us, before we begin with him; when we are seeking to be in Covenant with him, it is from himself alluring and drawing us unto him. Thus *Ezek. 20. 37. I will bring them* (says the Lord) *into the Bond of the Covenant.* He prepares his own way for it, and then finishes the Work; *Heb. 12. 2.* And therefore whereas in speaking of this Grace of Faith, we speak sometimes of the Habit, and sometimes of the Act of it; it may be inquir'd, which of these it is that is requir'd of us, that we may be brought into the Bond of the Covenant. *Ans.* It is the latter, the Act; Faith acting and working towards the Promise in Christ, and from the Promise, and causing us to live by Faith in the Promise, according to that, *Gal. 2. 20. The Life which I now live, I live by the Faith of the Son of God.* The Habit of Faith is that which God promises to us as a part of the Covenant on his part, when he says, *I will give you a new Heart, &c.* And this he worketh in us in our effectual Calling; and then the acting of that Faith receiv'd,

ceiv'd, is that which is requir'd on our part. The Habit is first freely given us, and wrought in us by the Lord himself, to enable us to act by it, and to live the Life of Faith; and then we having receiv'd the Gift, the Habit of it, then the Lord requireth of us that we should put forth Acts of Faith, both by waiting upon him to receive from him all the Good which he hath promis'd, and by walking in all Obedience of Faith before him, by an humble Submission to his Will and Government in and over us. This Work of Faith the Apostle shews fully to have been in those Saints, in *Heb. 11.* both in expecting the Promise, with patient Suffering under the hope of it, and in obedient Submission to any Commandment of God: and these Acts of Faith are imply'd in that Expression of *walking by Faith*, *2 Cor. 5. 7.* and *the Work of Faith*, *1 Thess. 1. 3.* and in that Faith is said *to work by Love*, *Gal. 5. 6.* It is the Act of Faith which receives the Promise, and Christ in the Promise; *John 1. 12. Heb. 11. 13.* Faith is the Hand of the Soul, the putting forth of which is the Act by which we receive Christ and Grace offer'd in this Covenant; and by this we are enabled to live the Life of Faith, according to the several Occasions we meet withal; *2 Cor. 5. 7, 9. & Gal. 2. 20.* before mention'd. And hence it is that Faith and Holiness cannot be separated, no more than Light can be separated from the Sun. *A good Tree* (our blessed Saviour says) *is known by its Fruit*; and so is a right and sound Faith. He that believes in Truth, he cannot but love; and if he love, he cannot but seek to please God in well-doing. Such therefore as say they have Faith, and hope to partake in the Blessings of the Covenant, and yet live loosely, carnally, and in the habitual Allowance of Sin, they do but deceive themselves; they may be in love with Hell and Death, but have no part in the Covenant of Life and Peace.

When therefore the Lord is preparing his way for entering into Covenant with us, he breaks us off from our Covenant with Hell and Death, he makes us sensible of our undone Condition in our selves, that we are without God, without Christ, and so without Hope, *Eph. 2. 12.* while in our natural Estate, and that we are not his People; but he sheweth himself willing to receive us to
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Grace, and to enter into a new Covenant with us, that we may be his People, and that he may be our God; *Prov.* 1. 20, 21. & *Isa.* 55. 3. Yea, he beseeches us to be reconcil'd unto him, *2 Cor.* 5. 20. expressing his Pity, and lamenting over us, *Jer.* 3. 12. *Ezek.* 33. 11. that he may thereby prevail with us to come into Covenant with him. In these Promises and Offers of Grace which he makes to us, the Lord usually sets in and sets them home upon the Hearts of those that he will bring unto himself: these sometimes, as Seeds, quickly put forth and act towards the Covenant propounded, and Faith lays hold of it, as we see in *Lydia*, the *Jaylor*, *Zacheus*, and others: And he leaves such a Touch of his Spirit upon the Heart, as maketh the Soul affectionate towards him, that it cannot rest without a saving Interest in him, and till it is in Covenant with him.

And we must farther observe, that whatsoever Faith doth in seeking to enter into this Covenant with God, it doth it always in that way, and according to that order, in which the Lord hath gone before us in the Offer of his Covenant unto us. Faith doth always follow the Word, and doth nothing but as it hath a Word of Faith to guide its way. It goes step by step, as it hath the Light of the Word directing and going before. It doth not prescribe to God, but answers and applieth it self to his Offer; and knowing that his everlasting Estate for Life or Death stands at the mere Good-pleasure and Mercy of God, it gladly comes and humbly accepts the Offer of Grace, in the same way as it is tender'd and offer'd to us by the Lord.

Now in that main Promise of the Covenant (which is indeed the Sum of all) *I will be thy God*; God offers himself to us,

1. As a God of Mercy to pardon us, and as a God of Blessing to bless us with all sufficient Blessings. And,

2. As a God over us and above us, to order us and rule us in all our ways, to govern us according to his own Will, that he may be glorify'd in us.

The Work of Faith then being to carry the Soul towards the Covenant, in that order and way as it is propounded, it first accepteth the Grace offer'd, resting upon God for all the Mercy which he hath promis'd. And,

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(2.) It taketh God to be God over us, submitting to his Government and Authority, to command and rule us in all things according to his own Will. But more particularly,

1. God making himself known to us as a God of Mercy, gracious, long-suffering, pardoning Iniquity, Transgression and Sin; and offering himself to be reconcil'd unto us, tho we have rebell'd against him; promising to be a Father unto us, and to accept of us as his Sons and Daughters in his Beloved.

Now the Work of Faith, in respect of this Offer of Grace, is, only to accept the Grace offer'd, to lay hold on it, and take it unto our selves, being so freely offer'd. Faith brings nothing to God of our own, to stand in exchange of it; it receiveth a Gift, but gives no Price. The Lord holds out and offers the Grace of the Covenant, and Faith receives it, and makes it our own. Hence, *Isa. 56. 4.* we are said to lay hold on the Covenant, being in some measure made sensible of the want of Grace (being Strangers to this Covenant) and of the most valuable Blessings contain'd and treasur'd up in it; in comparison of which, all other things, which before we plac'd our Happiness in, as Riches, &c. becoming vile in our esteem, and things of no value, Faith makes us (as the Prodigal did) change our Choice, and be willing to part with all for that Pearl of Price and rich Treasure that he beholds therein; for which he is now content to give all the Substance of his House. And tho the Sense of obtaining this so great a Blessing, is sometimes defer'd (tho so much desir'd and long'd for) Faith being yet weak, and unacquainted with the Lord's dealing with his People, that he uses by Terrors of Death sometimes to bring the Soul to Life and Peace; and also apprehending it self utterly unworthy and incapable of so high a Privilege, to be in Favour and Covenant with the most high God; being conscious of much Sin, and sharpen'd by Satan's working in and with the Sense thereof, the Soul may for a time be under great Fears, Discouragements, Trouble, and Doubting, which keep it off from the way of Peace, and closing with the Covenant: yet Faith (tho weak) considering the Promises and Encouragements which God has given us in his Word, inviting all to come to him, and that whosoever doth,

doth, *he will in no wise cast out*, John 6. 37. and being therefore importunate at the Throne of Grace for it, is brought at last to embrace the Promise, and the Lord Jesus Christ therein : it lays him in its Bosom, brings him into the Chamber of the Heart, there to rest and abide for ever. And the Soul possessing these Promises as her own, rests in him, and is satisfy'd with him ; blessing God, and committing it self for ever to that Mercy and Goodness that hath been thus reveal'd to it. And thus the Soul, sometimes sooner and more immediately, and sometimes after much Doubting, Fears and Discouragements, is brought to enter into a Covenant of Peace with the most High God ; yielding up it self to him, and committing it self to him, to be kept by him unto Salvation, according to his Covenant and Promise, and rejoicing in him as one of his People, to whom the Lord is now become his Salvation. And thus Faith closeth with the first part of the Covenant.

2. Concerning the other part of it, wherein God offers himself to us to be a God over us, to rule and govern us in obedience to his Will ; Faith works the Soul to a closing with this also. The converting Sinner having tasted the Fruit of his own former ways, and finding how bitter and evil it is that he hath sinned, doth now desire to resign up himself to the Lord's Government ; being willing to deny his own Will, and to take up the Yoke of Christ, and be subject thereunto. He now says no more, *Who is Lord over me ?* Psal. 12. 4. He doth no longer look on himself as his own, to live to himself after his own Mind and Will ; but being weary of his own ways, and finding it sufficient (and too much) that he hath spent the time past in the Lusts of the Flesh ; and in a sense of his former Rebellion and Unfaithfulness in breaking the Covenant, which he was in his Baptism enter'd into, humbling himself before the Lord, and condemning himself, confessing and acknowledging that it were just if he were destroy'd : he now resigns himself to the Good-pleasure of his Will, as a God of infinite Mercy and Grace, in offering again to receive him ; and commits himself willingly to his gracious Government, taking him to be his God and Portion, to rule and govern him as he pleases, and to direct and order him in all his ways. Faith now sets up God upon

upon his Throne, and says, Let the Lord reign for ever and ever; Reign thou over me, O Lord, and lead me in the way which leads unto thee. Tho we have been vile Sinners before, and guilty of the greatest Rebellions against the Lord, this hinders us not from entering into Covenant with him; but if we will now become his People, we must henceforth walk no more as we were wont to do, but must now be separate from our Uncleannefs: 2 Cor. 6. 17. Eph. 4. 17. *Come out from among them, and be separate, saith the Lord, and touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you, &c. Come and let us reason together, saith the Lord; Let us make an Agreement together, but withal, Wash you, make you clean, put away the Evil of your Doings, &c. Isa. 1. 16, 17, 18. Mark 1. 15. Repent, and believe the Gospel.* This is the Lord's manner of Invitation; so that Faith sees a necessity of submitting to God's Authority, because it may not take hold of one part of the Covenant without the other. But if we will have God to be our God, to pardon and bless us, we must have him also to be a God over us, to govern us according to his own Will.

Again, Faith opens the Understanding, convincing us how just, how equal and reasonable it is, that God should rule, and the Creature obey. By Faith we see the invisible things of God, his Excellency and Majesty, clothed with Glory and Honour, and attended upon with Millions of Angels ministring unto him: by Faith we see him governing the whole World by his Wisdom and Power, Psal. 103. We look at him as King of Kings, as Prince of all the Rulers of the Earth, before whom all the Nations of the World put together are as nothing, &c. Faith also sets before us the Benefits and Kindness of God towards us, and so persuades us by those Mercies of God to give up our selves as a Sacrifice, in humble Obedience to his Will, Rom. 12. 1. Psal. 86. 12, 13. *I will praise thee, O Lord, &c. for great is thy Mercy towards me; and thou hast deliver'd my Soul from the lowest Hell.* Now God is counted worthy of all Honour and Service, who hath saved us from so great a Death, when he might so justly have destroy'd us.

Farther, Faith makes us look at the Lord's Government as a merciful Government, bringing Peace and Blessing to those that are under it. It looks at this King
of

of *Israel* as a merciful King, *1 Kings* 20.31. It counts those Subjects happy that are free of this Kingdom; it makes the Soul lament its Bondage under other Lords, as *Isa.* 26.13. and the Laws of God, which were before counted as Cords and Bands, are now esteem'd *holy, and just, and good*, *Rom.* 7.12. Faith believes that which the Lord hath said, that *he hath given us his Commandments for our good, that it may go well with us for ever*; *Deut.* 4.40. The Soul by Faith is reconcil'd to God, and having believ'd his Goodness, it lays down all its former Enmity and Weapons of Defiance, and submits to him, being overcome with his Love in Christ, *1 John* 4.9, 10, 19. And it now grieves when it is hinder'd, that it cannot do that which he hath commanded. And thus the Covenant is made up in both parts of it, as offer'd to us by God, and receiv'd of us by Faith; *1 Kings* 20.34. Thus the Lord enters into a gracious Covenant again with us, and if we thus *come to him, he will in no wise cast us out*, *John* 6.37. Let us therefore, who have now been spared so long by his Mercy, and had many gracious Invitations to come to him, but have long rejected them; let us in the like manner go and humble our selves before the Lord, confess our Treachery and Rebellion, look at the Lord as having a golden Scepter in his hand, and in the name of our blessed Mediator, intreat him to enter into a Covenant with us, and submit our selves wholly to be at his command. Plead the Promise of his Grace, touch the top of the Scepter, and *take hold of the Covenant*, and then certainly the Lord will enter into Covenant with thee; *he will be a God unto thee*, and take thee to be *one of his People*.

And as this should excite us all to great Thankfulness, who are thro rich, free, and infinite Grace already come into the Covenant; so also in regard the Terms of it are not only indispensibly necessary, on account of the Lord's Authority over us, but also so much for our own unspeakable benefit and advantage; let it also excite and provoke us all who expect the Blessings which it brings, to look to our selves, and to take heed that we be not unfaithful in the Covenant that we have made. This the Lord expects, *Exod.* 19.5. that we should walk according to the Covenant that we have made with him, and be careful to keep it, to cleave to the Lord's Covenant,

nant, and to live unto him. In the things of this Life a strict eye is had to our Covenants, that we forfeit them not: now our Life lies upon our keeping Covenant, in his strength who is our Surety, and has by his Grace undertaken it for us. And seeing we have a Promise left us of entering into his Rest (there is the Blessing promis'd) let us take heed lest there be in any of us an unfaithful Heart, so as to depart from the living God; lest (thro Unbelief) any of us should be depriv'd of those invaluable Blessings of it. If we disregard the Condition, we forsake the Promise. When the Lord took *Abraham* into Covenant, and told him what he would be to him [*an All-sufficient God*] he binds *Abraham* to walk in Covenant with him; *Gen. 17. 1. Thou shalt walk before me, and be upright.* So when God takes us into Covenant with himself, we are said to be brought into the Bond of the Covenant, *Ezek. 20. 37.* to teach us that now we must look upon our selves as ty'd and bound unto God, in a Covenant never to be broken. We are no longer at our own liberty to walk as we list, but are call'd upon to *deny our selves*, &c. *Mat. 16. 24.* We must deny our own Inclinations, Wills, and Affections, refuse to be govern'd any longer by them, and resign our selves to the Will of God, to be only and wholly for him, and that for ever: *Rom. 12. 1.* We must *present our Bodies a living and acceptable Sacrifice*, to live unto him, and be our own no more: *Hos. 2. 19. I will betroth (or marry) thee to my self.* And therefore we must (as the Spouse doth) resign up our selves to be ruled and governed according to his Will; lay all at his feet, live upon him as our God, clothed with all his essential Perfections, and in all his personal Relations; and let all be done in his blessed Mediation, who is *the Lord our Righteousness*, and hath undertaken for us. Let us walk in a believing Dependence upon him, with respect to all his Offices, and the gracious Promises of this Covenant; and let us accordingly resign up all our Powers and Faculties, and our whole Interests, to be his: *2 Cor. 8. 5.* These Bonds of the Covenant are not like the Fetters of a Prison, but they are the Bonds of our spiritual Wedlock, by which we are marry'd to the King of Glory. Let us not seek therefore to break them, nor cast them from us any more; but let us love these Bonds, and

with our Hands give up our Hearts also to the Lord, to be bound in them, and to be his for ever.

We have broken the first Covenant of Works, let us take heed we be not found treacherously breaking a second; for as we cannot expect any other, so we could not possibly have a better, this being now *an everlasting Covenant, well-order'd in all things and sure.* Let us therefore rejoice for ever therein, as being all our Salvation and all our Desire: and if we walk uprightly herein, remember this Covenant is the Covenant of a faithful God, who cannot, and has accordingly graciously promis'd that he will not, fail nor forsake his Covenant People; 1 Sam. 12. 22. Heb. 13. 5. And the Grace whereby we shall be made and kept faithful therein, being part of the Purchase of his Blood, and made over to us in this Covenant, we may in this way of our Duty be assur'd of it, and comfortably depend thereon. But if notwithstanding all that our blessed Lord hath done and suffer'd on our behalf, and in order to our Salvation; if we yet refuse him, and refuse to come up to the Terms of the Gospel and Covenant of Grace therein offer'd to us; or being enter'd into it, prove treacherous, and will not be faithful in it; we do in vain expect to have any saving Benefit thereby. No, in that case it leaves us to the Condemnation still of the Covenant of Works, it leaves us where it found us, the Wrath of God still abides on us; nay, this will increase it, that to the Breach of the Covenant of Works we add this great provoking Sin, of slighting and contemning such a gracious Covenant. This will be the greater Condemnation (and we must expect to find it so) if we will still *neglect and slight so great Salvation*, as is tender'd to us in the Gospel.

And how should this now turn our Bowels towards our poor Children, and draw out our Pity and Compassion towards them, who are so miserable in themselves, as all are by Nature! How should we pour out our Prayers and Tears daily before the Lord for them, and tender Mothers travail in Birth again, till they may see Christ form'd in their Children! For tho our Children are by Nature involv'd in this sinful miserable Estate, as all are; yet there is a Remedy provided in Christ, and set forth in the Gospel: And how should we fear depriving

depriving our Infants of that Ordinance they are capable of, even in Infancy ! Infant-Circumcision under the Law pointed at the Corruption of the natural Birth, so doth Infant-Baptism under the Gospel ; and they that deny this Ordinance to them, would make Christ less favourable to the Children of Believers under the Gospel, than he was to the Children of his People of old. And tho we do not suppose Grace necessarily ty'd to the outward Ordinance, as if whosoever did partake of the one, must necessarily partake of the other ; nor think as the Papists, that original Sin has the nature of Sin only before, not after Baptism ; yet surely such an Expression of God's Favour towards our poor Children, ought to be priz'd, and thankfully embrac'd and valu'd by us. And as the Lord is pleas'd to make a Tender of Himself, his Son, and Spirit, to be our God in Covenant with us, and with our Seed together with our selves ; we are accordingly oblig'd, with a sincere and hearty Affection, to consecrate to him our selves, and all that we are and have ; humbly submitting all to his Will, and freely leaving it to him, to do with us and all that is ours as he sees good. This is not only our Duty, but our greatest Privilege ; for we are never so much our own, nor so safe, as in his hand. The great God is our Maker and constant Maintainer and Owner, the Donor of all we enjoy any delight or comfort in, or have any help or succour from ; and therefore hath an indisputable Right to do what he pleaseth with us and all ours. And we are likewise his by a superadded Right of Redemption : When we had undone and destroy'd our selves by sinning against him, and became liable to the eternal Revenges of his Justice, and could no way possibly have brought our selves out of this miserable Condition ; he was pleas'd to think Thoughts of Mercy and Pity towards us, and to give his dear and only Son out of his Bosom to redeem and rescue us out of it : so that in this respect also we are no longer our own, or at our own dispose, but being bought with a Price, and that of his own precious Blood, we are now infinitely oblig'd to live unto him, and to glorify him with our Bodies and Spirits, which are his, and with all that we have and are.

He doth not divest himself of that Propriety in us and all that we have, where he gives us the fullest Possession

session and freest Use, and certainly may do what he will with his own : and the Acknowledgment of this his Right at all times, is our unquestionable Duty. We must not pretend to add any Limits, Clogs, or Conditions; but whatever comes, whatever we want, or in any respects howsoever we are dealt withal, our selves or ours, we are already engag'd to acquiesce in the Will of God, our Owner, Redeemer, and Benefactor, without any restriction. *Jacob's Vow* was of this nature, *Gen.* 28. 20, 21.

And this is what we all are sacramentally oblig'd unto in our baptismal Covenant, which is most solemn and tremendous ; herein God's gracious Promises and Man's Purpose are by sensible Signs and external Actions represented, ratify'd, and establish'd : we had need therefore take care rightly to understand them, because in the whole Course of our Lives we are continually to be govern'd by them. The Christian Vow, that is, the Vow which our holy Profession engageth us in, and which we are brought under in our Baptism, is of all other the most important, sacred, and inviolable ; 'tis that wherein all, both young and old, that name the Name of Christ, are most nearly concern'd : no less a matter than the Life or Death of our immortal Souls depending on the faithful keeping or perfidious breaking of it ; which Consideration should command a serious Regard to it.

The Lord not delighting (as has been before shew'd) to act upon mere Prerogative with his Creatures, tho his Right to command us is so absolute and uncontrollable, that he might have justly done it under the severest Threatnings, till he had consum'd us ; he hath been pleas'd to temper his Authority and Sovereignty with great Sweetness and Beneficence, treating with us upon such gracious Terms as these : Do you thus and thus, and such and such shall be my Carriage ; Be you careful of your Duty, and I will afford you my Favour, and give you this, and that, and the other Mark of it. This is a Covenant-Form of Dealing, in which Blessings are promis'd on God's part, in and thro Christ the Mediator of this Covenant ; and Duties requir'd on ours, in the strength of Christ, and of his Spirit, which Duties are pre-requir'd to the actual Enjoyment of the Blessings promis'd. 'Tis the end of every Covenant, to bring us
nearer

nearer to God, and in order to it he makes such Promises; and a serious and sincere Engagement on our part, is the Band thereof: as in that Covenant the Lord made with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. and with the *Israelites*, Exod. 20. & Cap. 23. & Cap. 24. They having by a solemn Engagement bound themselves to God, and to Obedience to him, *Moses* by God's Command uses the external Sign of sprinkling Blood, to shew that God looked upon his Promises as binding upon him, thro the Blood of the everlasting Covenant.

Now under the New Testament there are two federal Transactions between God and us, instituted as Ordinances in the Christian Church [call'd Sacraments] in both which we may observe the same Procedure; both are on God's part Seals of the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, and on Man's part Engagements to all the Duties of the Covenant. God engageth to be our God, and to be all in all, in and unto us; and we consent and engage our selves to be his People, particularly and by name as it were, and to carry our selves accordingly to him, no longer as our own, but his. The Christian Vow in both the Sacraments of the New Testament hath a particular relation to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, according to their distinct Agency in the great Work of our Redemption and Salvation; each Person in the Sacred Trinity having a hand therein. And as the Work of each is distinct, so our Duty to each is likewise distinct; and consequently our Vow (besides what is owing to the great God in common) containeth an Engagement to the special Duties owing to each Person.

C H A P. XIX.

*Of the Baptismal Vow, and our Engagement to
be the Lord's.*

Baptism was instituted by our blessed Lord as a Sacred Rite, whereby Persons were to be first initiated into the Christian Covenant: and whether sooner or later administred, it carries in it an Obligation to all the Duties of that Covenant, on which its Blessings, as to our Part and Interest in them, are suspended. In Baptism there is always express'd or imply'd a Vow of hearty Compliance with all the Demands of the Covenant of Grace; without which suppos'd, the pouring on of Water, in the Name of the Father, Son and Spirit, by the Minister as God's Representative, would be utterly unavailable, either to seal or convey those inestimable Gospel-Blessings of Pardon and Peace, Adoption, Sanctification, and a Right to eternal Life.

But this Baptismal Vow must be differently consider'd by all that would avoid Confusion, according to the different state of the Subjects of Baptism: which are either Persons adult, that are come to Years of Understanding, and so are capable of transacting personally for themselves; or the Children of Christian Parents, in their Infant-State.

And here it must be observ'd, that it was much more usual for Persons first to come under this Vow in Baptism in an adult state, in the primitive Church, when Christianity first made its entrance, than in After-times, when the World, that lay before in darkness, was better inform'd by Gospel-Light; which carrying its own Evidence along with it, and diffusing it self far and wide, and back'd by the miraculous Power then resident in the Church, multitudes were brought in from Judaism and Gentilism in all its Forms to Christianity. But that this Vow is by no means to be confin'd to the Adult, but even those who are baptiz'd when Infants are as much concern'd in it: For, (1.) Their Infant-Dedication
to

to God in Covenant, obliges them to stand to and keep this Vow, as much as if 'twere personally made in their first Consecration. And, (2.) Their Infant-Baptism obliges them actually to make a Vow of this nature when they come to Age, and so are capable of personally covenanting for themselves. This ought seriously therefore to be consider'd by all that are already under it, or that are adult and coming under so solemn an Engagement as Baptism carries in it; that so they may do it understandingly, deliberately, and with full Consent of Heart, and that there may be no danger of after drawing back.

The sacred Profession and Vow which, in our Baptism, either actually and voluntarily by our selves, or by our Parents immediately, or by any others deputed by them, we come under, is of this tenour :

“ I believe in an eternal, infinitely glorious, and all-
“ sufficient God, who made Heaven and Earth ; and in
“ Jesus Christ his only Son, who redeemed Mankind
“ from Misery and Wrath ; and in the ever-blessed Spi-
“ rit, the Fountain of all Grace and Peace. To this
“ God the Father, Son, and Spirit, I willingly, freely,
“ and cheerfully consecrate my self. For I am sensible
“ God is my Owner and Proprietor ; to him therefore
“ I make an absolute Resignation of my self, and all
“ that is or ever shall be mine, as his own : engaging to
“ use my self, and all that I have, as his, and conten-
“ tedly to rest in all his Disposals. And it being my
“ Rectitude and Happiness to obey and please him, I'll
“ labour to bring both my Soul and Body into the most
“ absolute Subjection to him, and to make it my delight
“ and business sincerely and exactly to obey him. I'll
“ love him with my whole Heart and Soul, and Mind
“ and Might ; and quiet my self in his Love and Faith-
“ fulness, whatever shall befall me in the World. I'll
“ lead a Life of Thankfulness to him for his innumera-
“ ble Benefits, and endeavour to glorify him with the
“ Estimation of my Mind, the Praises of my Mouth,
“ and the Holiness of my Life and Conversation. With
“ humble Thankfulness I adore my dearest Saviour for
“ his redeeming Love, and on his Merits I'll bottom all
“ my Hopes of Pardon, Justification, and eternal Life ;
“ and all those spiritual Blessings which he hath pur-
“ chas'd,

" chas'd, to prepare and fit his People for it. I am
 " heartily grieved for all my Sins, and sensible they
 " would destroy me, without his Mediation and Inter-
 " cession; to him therefore I fly as my City of Refuge;
 " him I resolve constantly to use as the means of my
 " Soul's Access to God, Acceptance with him, and Help
 " and Comfort from him; and I'll entertain no thought
 " of coming to the Father but by him: and he being
 " the great Prophet and Teacher of his Church, I'll
 " humbly wait, to learn of him by his Spirit, Word,
 " and Ministers, the farther Knowledge of God, and of
 " the things that tend to my everlasting Peace and Sal-
 " vation; and this with an honest, willing, and teach-
 " able Mind; in Faith, Diligence, Obedience, Patience,
 " and Peace. I now swear Fealty to him, as my Lord
 " and King; and faithfully promise and vow sincere
 " Obedience to all his holy Laws and Commandments.
 " I'll imitate him as my Pattern, and write after the
 " Copy that he hath set me; both as to my Temper and
 " my Life. I'll trust him as the great Physician of Souls,
 " and take all his saving Medicines, how unpleasing
 " and distastful soever. I'll follow him as the Captain
 " of my Salvation, whithersoever he shall lead me;
 " and spend my Days in a vigilant, resolute, and con-
 " stant War, against the Flesh, the World, and the
 " Devil.

" For I renounce the Flesh, that is naturally pleas'd
 " with Sin, and impatient of necessary Confinements;
 " I renounce Self, as my End; I also renounce the
 " World, which is so apt to administer Food and Fuel
 " to my Lusts; I renounce all that in it, wherewith
 " the carnal part is gratify'd, as matters of Pleasure,
 " Profit, or Honour, wherever these stand in compe-
 " tition with my Saviour, and any regard to them, as
 " means to my Happiness: I renounce the Devil, and
 " all Subjection to him; 'tis Christ, the Lord of Life, to
 " whom alone I'll look, 'tis his Subject I resolve to be.

" I'll humbly, earnestly, daily implore the Help and
 " Assistance of the blessed Spirit of Grace; that he may
 " reside in me, and be the Life of my Soul: and by the
 " Help of God, I will not resist or quench any of his
 " holy Motions, but thankfully obey him. The Scrip-
 " tures inspired by him, I take for the Rule of my Faith

" and

“ and Life, and engage to keep close to them: And
 “ Christianity (to the Truth whereof he so many ways
 “ hath set his Seal) is the Religion I'll profess; to that
 “ I'll adhere, and therein alone expect Salvation. On
 “ the Assistance of this blessed Spirit alone, shall be all
 “ my dependence in my Christian Course; and his Con-
 “ duct I'll follow through all Difficulties and Tempta-
 “ tions in the way of Holiness, towards everlasting Hap-
 “ piness.

“ For it shall be my constant Endeavour to adorn
 “ the Doctrine of God my Saviour in all things; by li-
 “ ving soberly, righteously, and godly in this present
 “ World. I'll do my gracious God all the Service, and
 “ others all the Good I can, in Works of Piety, Justice,
 “ and Charity; with Prudence, Fidelity, Industry, Zeal,
 “ and Delight; like one that knows 'tis God that in-
 “ trusts me with all my Talents, of the Improvement
 “ whereof I must give a strict Account. I will be care-
 “ ful to render unto all their Dues; Tribute to whom
 “ Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear
 “ to whom Fear, and Honour to whom Honour; and
 “ to owe no Man any thing but Love: and that is a
 “ Debt which I will be continually paying, by all suita-
 “ ble Expressions of Affection and Tenderness to all I
 “ have to do with; especially to those to whom Na-
 “ ture or Providence hath peculiarly link'd me. I'll
 “ love all that have the same Nature with my self; but
 “ more especially who are Children with me, of the
 “ same heavenly Father, Members of the same Body,
 “ and Heirs of the same Inheritance: and in general,
 “ I'll make this my Rule, to do to others as I would my
 “ self be done unto. I'll carefully put away from me all
 “ Wrath, Anger, and Clamour, and beware of all vio-
 “ lent Passion. I'll keep at the greatest distance from
 “ any sort of Leudness or Wantonness; hate and abhor
 “ all Lying and Slandering, Backbiting and Detracting:
 “ and by Divine Grace and Assistance, never suffer my
 “ self to envy my Neighbour's Prosperity, or rejoice in
 “ his Adversity; but I will be pitiful and courteous,
 “ tender-hearted and compassionate. I'll relieve the
 “ Necessitous, feed the Hungry, cloathe the Naked, and
 “ entertain Strangers; and visit the Sick and the Im-
 “ prison'd, as I have Ability and Opportunity: which

“ are things, my blessed Lord hath testified, are very
 “ acceptable and pleasing to him. I’ll faithfully en-
 “ deavour to fill up all my Places and Relations, with
 “ suitable prescrib’d Duty, and to employ all my Trusts
 “ for God. I’ll be orderly in his Church, and therein
 “ submit to all his Discipline, and endeavour to keep the
 “ Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. I’ll main-
 “ tain no Grudges against any; but when injur’d, will
 “ be ready to forgive, as my heavenly Father (I hope)
 “ for Christ’s sake, will forgive me. I’ll be willing to
 “ take up my Cross, whenever called to it; and rather
 “ forsake all things, than desert my God and Saviour.

“ And since my Weakness is such, as that let me do
 “ my best I shall often stumble and fall; whenever I do
 “ so, I’ll renew my Repentance; and Divine Grace en-
 “ abling me, return again to my Obedience.

“ And since it hath pleased my dearest Saviour to
 “ institute a standing Memorial in his Church, of his
 “ Death and Passion, to be solemnized by all who pro-
 “ fess to be his Followers; I do therefore solemnly vow
 “ and promise, with an humble, penitent, and believing
 “ Heart, in a fiducial Dependence upon his Grace, to
 “ come unto his Table when I am invited, and call’d:
 “ and to join in that sacred Solemnity, that I may
 “ thereby testify my Union with the Church, my Cha-
 “ rity for all, and my Thankfulness to Christ; and will
 “ never forget his unspeakable Love to my poor Soul,
 “ manifested in his Sacrifice of everlasting Efficacy and
 “ Virtue; and will hope, according to the Integrity of
 “ my Heart, and his gracious Covenant, that tho my
 “ Failings be many, yet he will encrease my Graces and
 “ Heavenly Comforts, upon my waiting upon him
 “ therein.

“ And in the keeping of this my Covenant and Vow,
 “ and acting agreeable thereunto; which I profess to do
 “ only in a believing dependence upon that Grace and
 “ Strength, for which I have his Covenant-Promise, ra-
 “ tify’d in his own Blood: I resolve, by the Assistance
 “ of that Grace, to persevere and hold on to the end of
 “ my Days; living in the constant expectation of Death,
 “ Judgment, and Eternity, and my Lord’s Return.”

Tho the Obligation of adult Persons by their Baptis-
 mal Vow and Covenant be more immediate, and there-
 fore

fore more obvious and sensibly discernible; yet that of those that are baptized in Infancy, is as fully and sufficiently evident, if rightly stated. And that it is the Duty of all Christian Parents, to enter their Children, while Infants, into the visible Church and the Christian Covenant by Baptism; and so from the first, to bring them under the foregoing Vow: Which being taken for granted, as has been sufficiently and clearly proved by many worthy Authors on that Subject, from Scripture-Testimony; it is here to be considered, what Apprehensions we are to form, of the Engagement which such baptized Infants come under, and of the manner of their coming under it. And it seems also undeniable, that as it is in the Parent's Right, that Infants are admitted to Baptism; so it is by their Engagement, (whether it's done immediately in their own Persons, or by such as are deputed by them) that they are brought under the sacred Vow which that Solemnity carries in it; and that this their Infant-Dedication to God in Covenant, obliges them to, and to keep this Vow, as much as if it were personally made by them; and does also oblige them actually to make a Recognition of it, and to engage themselves personally to it, when they come to Age and Understanding, to be capable of personal covenanting for themselves.

As for the Part and Work of Parents, in thus devoting their Children to God, and bringing them under the Baptismal Vow; and also the Power of Parents to bring them, and the Children's Capacity of being brought under such an Obligation: see more at large in *Dr. Calamy's Discourse of Vows*, p. 50, &c. and p. 63. And,

1. Parents hereby disclaim all Right to their Children, that is inconsistent with God's absolute Propriety, and resign them, as a part of themselves, intirely to his Management and Disposal, begging his Acceptance of them for his own.

2. They bring them to God for his Blessing; and as they embrace the Covenant which the Gospel offers for themselves, so it is also their earnest Request, that their Children may partake of the inestimable Blessings of it; that these little Parts of themselves may be not only under his providential Care, but under the Entail of his

his Covenant-Love: and in order thereto, they bring them to receive the instituted Seal of the Covenant, that so that Promise, *Acts 2. 39.* (of Pardon, Favour, Grace, and Mercy) which is *to their Children*, as well as unto *themselves*, may actually reach them.

3. They consent, for their Children, to all God's Claims and Demands; and bind them (if they live) to all the Duties of the Covenant, as ever they expect or can desire they should share in the Blessings of it. That their Children should eventually live in God's Fear, and walk in his Ways, and carry it as his devoted Servants, is not in the power of the best of Parents to promise; that can only be brought about by the Aid and Power of Divine Grace, which is not at their dispose: but having a natural Power and Right to judg and act for them, till they become capable of judging and acting for themselves; they consent, on their behalf, to the Justice and Equity of the Covenant's Demands, and engage for them to a compliance therewith.

4. Being born in Christ's Family, to which their Parents belong, they bring them to his authorized Representative, that they may be enroll'd in the List of his Servants, in order to their sharing in all the blessed Privileges of his Domesticks, according to that *Levitical Law, Exod. 21. 4.* Parents, in that Solemnity, acknowledge our blessed Redeemer to be the rightful Lord and Master, both of them and theirs; the Rules and Orders of whose Family, they bind both themselves and their Children, to keep close unto. And he is graciously pleased to testify his Acceptance of theirs, as well as them, by certain solemn Rites he hath appointed by his Ministers to be used.

5. They do, as it were, enter a Protest against the Fruit of their own Bowels, and solemnly lay them under the Lord's Curse, if they live to cast off his Yoke, and lay aside his Fear, and revolt from his Covenant: tho this may be rarely considered by a Parent upon such an occasion, yet it is the Language of the Solemnity it self; all sacramental Vows, in their own nature, carrying Imprecations imply'd in them, upon the perfidious breaking of them, and their irreclaimable persisting therein.

6. Parents solemnly vow and promise to do all that in them lies, as their Children grow up, to make them
sensible

sensible of their Engagement and Obligation to be the Lord's, to whom they were so early consecrated and devoted; they oblige themselves, if they and their Children live, to instruct them in the great Principles of Religion; to help them to understand what their Baptism obliges them to, engage them to live answerably to that sacred Vow; and to bring them understandingly, seriously, and personally to renew it themselves; that so the Entail of Covenant-Blessings may be the more firmly secured to them. See this more largely in the formention'd Treatise of Vows, from p. 48. to p. 56. where you may also see the Sum of the Parent's Vow, in form, set down.

And now the Concern of Children in this Transaction of their Parents on their behalf, comes next to be consider'd.

1. They are hereby bound to lead a holy Life of Devotedness to God the Father, Son, and Spirit, according to this Covenant. Children henceforth stand bound hereto, not only by that Divine Law that requires it of them, but also by their Parents Engagement and Stipulation, which in matters of plain Duty, to be sure is binding, whatever it may be in things that are indifferent; as we find *Samuel*, under the Law, thought himself oblig'd by his Mother's Vow, and therefore gives himself freely to serve the Lord in his Tabernacle, according to the Dedication she had made of him. Yea, *Jephtha's* Daughter complies with her Father's Vow, *Judges* 11. 36. tho (as most think) it was to be offer'd up in Sacrifice. How much more then must those Children, who were in Infancy enter'd into the Christian Covenant by their Parents, be oblig'd to stand to it; when it engages them to nothing but what was of it self antecedently their Duty? It's a part of the Honour Nature has made due to Parents from their Children, that they own themselves bound by their Engagements for them; and their Interest in this case falls in with their Duty: the Advantages of a Compliance with their parental Dedication being very great; and the Mischiefs of a Refusal very evident and notorious. They are bound to conform to the Rules of that Family in which they were born, and to the Master whereof their Parents brought them to pay so early an Homage; and to continue in the Service of that Lord, (whose Badg they so soon receiv'd) till they can

can find a better ; and if they stay till then, they'll never quit his Service. The Obligation Children, by virtue of their Baptism, come under to an holy Devotedness, is of a mix'd nature : It's natural so far as it is an effect of the Parental Power duly exercis'd ; and positive, as of Divine Institution ; the case being the same with Circumcision of old, which oblig'd all that receiv'd it to a Subjection to the whole *Mosaick* Law, tho then administered in their Infancy, and on their Parents account, and at their desire, without the Childrens Consent ; so also are all baptized Persons, tho Infants, bound to a Subjection to the whole Gospel : and the denial hereof by any so baptized, is a spitting in their Parents Face ; nay, it is a pouring Contempt on God's sacred Institutions.

2. Children are bound to own their baptismal Obligation as soon as capable. If they are bound to stand to it, there's certainly all the reason in the World they should own they do so : they are bound to own it, in Duty to their Parents ; who by giving them thus up to God, more effectually consulted their Happiness and Welfare than they could have done any other way. They are bound also to do it in Gratitude to God, for so inestimable a Privilege as so early an Admission into his Family, and coming thereby under his Covenant. It's necessary they should do it, in order to the securing the Entail of Covenant-Blessings, to which their own personal taking upon them that Vow which they first came under, is necessary. For they are no longer to be consider'd as part of their Parents, than till they arrive at a Capacity of acting for themselves ; at which time God expects both that they should own their baptismal Dedication to have been a signal Mercy, declare their readiness to stand to it, and to the Vow they were then enter'd under ; and that they personally make it for themselves, and in their own Names, as ever they expect to reap the blessed Benefits that depend thereon. And tho this Vow was really binding when it was merely parental, yet it is still more firmly binding, having another Obligation added to it when it thus becomes personal : And those must look upon the Power of Parents over Children to be very small, that question whether they may rightfully bring their Children under a Bond

to do that when they come of Age, which is their unquestionable Duty then to do, whether there be such a prior parental Engagement or not. And in that case when Children are grown up, the Form before drawn up is as futable, as it is with reference to those who are not baptiz'd till they are adult.

Those who stand not to their Infant Baptismal Obligation when they are so grown up, are liable to be treated as obstinate Contemnors of the Divine Favour, as sacrilegious Alienators of what was peculiarly devoted, and as perjur'd Violators of God's Covenant. Their Case is not the same with that of the rest of the World, who remain undedicated and unconsecrated to God; but as their Advantages would be great if they were faithful, so will their Miseries be great if they are false to the Vow they came under in their Baptism. For tho Parents are the main Agents, yet are the Children mainly concern'd and bound, and on them therefore will the Penalty annex'd take place.

The Ministers who baptiz'd them, their Parents that devoted them, and as many as were Spectators of their Infant-Consecration, are so many Witnesses for God against them, if in their after Life they break God's Bands in sunder, and cast away his Cords from them. Ministers will then be ready to say, " Lord! here are
" such and such that we baptiz'd in thy Name, and introduced
" into the visible Church, in the Method which thou instituted,
" and thy Apostles practis'd: but before we did so, we thought we bound them fast to thee;
" we exacted of their Parents, on their behalf, a Renunciation of the
" Flesh, the World, and the Devil, and a free Consent to all thy
" Claims and Demands: that they were engag'd to this, we are
" Witnesses; if they have broken therefore the Vow they then came
" under, and persisted in so doing, we can testify they are
" perfidious Traitors and faithless Rebels, and deserve the
" severest Treatment." Pious Parents will also be ready to say, " Behold, O Lord, we gave these
" Children of ours to thee, from whom we receiv'd them;
" in thy Service we lifted them, and under thy Bonds we brought them
" with the instituted Solemnity, even in their very Infancy;
" and we did all that in us lay, to bring them under as strong and firm Engagements

"gagements as was possible, and as they grew up, en-
 "deavour'd to make them sensible how much they were
 "oblig'd to live to thee, to whom they were devoted;
 "their Blood therefore be upon themselves: if they
 "have wickedly and obstinately revolted from thee,
 "their Ruin will lie at their own doors, whereof we
 "are Witnesses." All others also who were present at
 the Solemnity of their Baptism, will be ready to bear
 witness, that they came early under God's gracious Co-
 venant, and were enter'd in a Bond to be faithful in all
 the Duties of it; which if they have wickedly neglected,
 and lived to themselves instead of living to God, they
 can attest they have broken a divine Vow that was upon
 them; which implies an highly aggravated Guilt. And
 O how sad a thing will it be, for Persons to have Mi-
 nisters, Parents, and Christian Friends, rising up in Judg-
 ment against them at last, for their revolting from that
 God, to whom they in their Infancy were consecrated,
 and breaking those Bands that should have fastned them
 to him!

As for those who are (or shall be) Parents, and have
 devoted their Children to God in Baptism, remember
 (I beseech you) and take care to breed them up for him,
 to whom you have consecrated them; expecting to be
 call'd to an account about your Carriage towards them,
 and Management of them another day. Take care to
 season their tender Minds well, instruct them diligently
 in their Knowledge of God, and of their Duty to him,
 in the Covenant of Grace, so well order'd in all things
 and sure, and in the Nature and Import of that Divine
 Vow you brought them under: Shew them what will be
 the Benefits of keeping it, the Danger of breaking it,
 and the Duties they are oblig'd to by it; and do what
 you can to bring them to take it upon themselves, and
 renew their Covenant with God in their own Persons;
 as soon as they are capable. Preserve them as much as
 may be from the Infections of an evil Age; set them
 good Examples your selves, and get them among as
 many other lively Patterns of serious Godliness as you
 can, that you may thereby provoke them to Imitation.
 Inure them to holy Exercises from their Youth up; pos-
 sess them with as great a Reverence of the Holy Scrip-
 tures as you can; narrowly watch their Tongues from
 the

the first that they begin to use them; and do what in you lies betimes, to learn them to govern their Appetites: teach them the Worth of Time, and spur them on to make a diligent Improvement of it; encourage them when they do well, and reprove and correct them when they do amiss. Whatever Neglects or Miscarriages you overlook or pass by, be sure you allow them in nothing that is sinful. This will be the way for you to have Peace and Comfort, whatever be the Consequences.

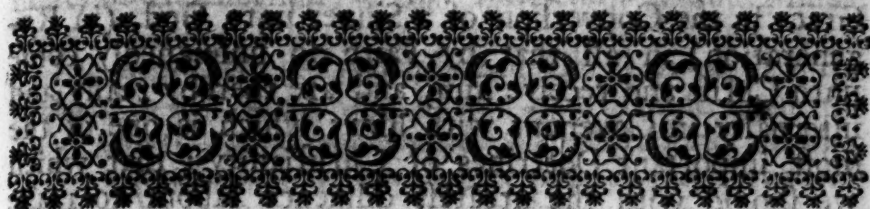
Remember how many ways you are oblig'd hereto, how solemnly you have promis'd it, how certainly God expects it, and how severely he'll punish the Neglect of it. How sad a thing will it be, to have the Blood of your Childrens Souls lying at your door, on the account of your Carelessness in that matter, when your utmost Diligence was requir'd? Should they hereafter prove Crosses and heart-breaking Afflictions, thro their Undutifulness, what a sad Aggravation will it be of your Trouble, to think that all this hath arisen from your want of Care in their Education? How will they cry out upon you hereafter, if ever they come to be sensible and awaken'd, for your unnatural Cruelty; who tho you may be tender enough of them, and kind enough to them in other respects, yet minded not their Souls, took not any sutable care to breed them up for him to whom you devoted them? Nay, how will they in another World, if they finally persist in Wickedness, exclaim against you (who were the Instruments of conveying their Being to them) as their Soul-Murderers, and the first Occasions of their endless Ruin, by your Neglect to take that care of them which you engag'd to when you baptiz'd them? I beseech you therefore, as you have any Regard to God, a Desire to see true Religion, serious Piety and Godliness flourish; if you have any Love to the Fruit of your own Bowels, and any Regard to your own Peace now or hereafter; that you would make conscience of this matter, and pay the Vow you made, when you devoted your Children to God in Baptism.

And as for you Children, who thro God's great Goodness and your Parents Care have had the Privilege of an early Baptism; O be not so foolish as to cavil your selves out of the Benefit of it. Your Parents brought you under Vows to God; O desire not to be releas'd. If a

temporal Estate was settled on you before you were born, with easy Conditions, would you not own the binding Force of their Obligation upon you, in order to the keeping that Inheritance? And will you be more unjust to God, than you are to Man? Would you own your Parents power to engage you for a Trifle, and not when it is in order to an everlasting Crown? And when by your disowning it, you forfeit all the Benefits of it; you cast off God, and reject his Favour, and must be cast for ever out of his Presence into the unquenchable Flames of his Wrath and Indignation.

But if you have any Concern for your Souls, any Sense of the Wretchedness of your natural Estate, and of the Desirableness of the Favour of God (thro Christ) you cannot but prize your so early Dedication to God, and so early Admission into this Covenant, which in him you are invited sincerely to embrace and adhere to, as an invaluable Mercy. O prize it, improve it heartily, bless God for it, for such a Covenant, and stand to the Vow you are come under, and let it be the business of your Lives to discharge and pay it. Do not pretend it's hard and strict, for there's nothing in it but what's necessary, nay and for your own greatest advantage: all its Confinements are the Appointment and Issue of infinite Wisdom for your Good, and none of them can be spared without your own apparent Detriment. Think often and seriously of the Unsuitableness of your Carriage and Behaviour hitherto, to that Engagement you are under, and that with Sorrow and Lamentation: think what would become of you, should God take the Forfeitures at your hand of Covenant-Blessings; and if you have any Regard to God, any Love to your own Souls, or any Desire to be happy here or hereafter, lay aside all Excuses, and without delay freely and solemnly own and acknowledg this Vow of God that is upon you, and the Greatness of those Blessings promis'd and made over to you in the Covenant of Grace, which are before mention'd, if you do sincerely and unfeignedly close therewith, and do set your selves with all your might (in the strength of Christ therein made over to you, and thro the Assistance of his Holy Spirit) to live answerably thereto.

The End of the First Part.



PART II.

CHAP. I.

Of sound Conversion and Regeneration, with the Nature, Signs, and Evidences thereof.

HAVING consider'd before the miserable Condition of Man by Nature, which is such as is not to be rested in; and treated of the Covenant of Grace in and thro Christ (the second *Adam*) who is the Blessed Mediator of it; and having spoken of the great and invaluable Benefits and Blessings of that Covenant, which they will be everlastingly possess'd of, that have an Interest in it: having spoken also of the Terms or Condition of the New Covenant; and of the initiating Ordinance of Baptism, whereby Believers and their Seed are first enter'd and brought into it: Now for the preventing the dangerous and fatal Mistakes that may arise from thence, to the everlasting Ruin of the Souls of those that take up with the outward Administration of that Ordinance alone, and rest satisfy'd therein, as if Regeneration, and that saving Change that is so absolutely necessary in order to our Salvation, was inseparably annex'd to that Ordinance, and intail'd upon all that are the Subjects of it:

228 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

I come next to speak of that inward spiritual Change which is wrought by the Almighty Power of Divine Grace in the Conversion of a Sinner unto God, (in Regeneration) in all that by Faith do unfeignedly come unto Christ and receive him, and are thereby really and internally in Covenant with him: which is one of the most important Doctrines of Christianity; that which we should with the greatest diligence labour to make sure of, and not give any rest to our own Souls, till we can find that it is indeed wrought in us, that our Hearts and Natures are savingly renew'd and sanctify'd by the Holy Spirit of God, and that we have not only the Name of Christ by Baptism bestow'd upon us, but that by this new Birth we have also his holy Image implanted in us, and that we are made really such as are intitled to the Blessings of that Covenant. It is the one thing necessary, our All depends upon this, and therefore a Mistake herein must needs be the more inexpressibly fatal and pernicious. All your Profession, Civility, Privileges, Gifts, Duties, (tho in themselves very valuable) yet are but Cyphers, and signify nothing as to your eternal Safety and Happiness, unless Regeneration and Conversion to God be the Figure put before them. Our Saviour says, *John 3. 3. Except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*: that is, shall not enter into it, nor enjoy that blessed State and Condition which God hath design'd for his Children; which is partly in this Life, call'd the Kingdom of Grace; and partly hereafter, call'd the Kingdom of Glory. [*Born again, or born from above*] it is a Creation, because beyond the Sphere of natural Causes to produce; and it's call'd a new Creation, in opposition to the old Man. The Apostle tells us, *Eph. 2. 3. that we are by Nature Children of Wrath; i. e. by Nature as corrupted, as we have made it by the Fall*. For tho God made Man at first pure and righteous, yet since the Fall of Man from God, he is naturally prone to Sin, to all Sin, and averse to Righteousness, hath the Seeds of every Sin now in his Heart and Nature, a secret Enmity unto God, and Proneness to rebel against him: and from this corrupt Spring in us, all actual Sins and Transgressions proceed; so that before we can be in a Capacity to inherit the Kingdom of God, and to be made happy in his holy and blessed Presence, and in the Fruition

Fruition and Enjoyment of him, there must be a great and thorow Change, a new Nature wrought in us, we must be transform'd by the renewing of our Minds, *Rom. 12. 2.*

This new Birth is the forming of Christ in us, it is the Signature, and Engraving of the Holy Ghost upon the Soul, whereby the Man becomes another kind of Man than he was before, whilst in his natural and unrenew'd Estate; he is chang'd, and made Partaker of the Divine Nature, and a Child of God by Grace: and by Faith it is we become the living Members of Christ, and Temples of the Holy Ghost, this saving Change being then wrought in us. It's this saving and thorow Change which will give us an holy Improvement of all divine Providences, and manifests our Right to all the Promises and Covenant-Blessings, and which will prepare us for and at last bring us to the purchas'd Possession: It is this sanctifying Work of the Holy Spirit in us, in our Regeneration, that will teach us to live like Men, like Christians, and like what we profess our selves to be, and capacitate us to live, and that eternally, in the Love and Fruition of the holy and blessed God. It's the chief thing in the World we have to mind, as having the most immediate Tendency to God's Glory, and our own everlasting Happiness. He that wanteth this, hath nothing, (as was said before) the whole World cannot make up the want of it, nor a thousand Worlds, if we had the possession and enjoyment of them. Our eternal State depends upon our Sincerity or Hypocrisy in this; of what vast consequence therefore is it (in whatsoever you come short) to make sure here? All whom God hath a Purpose of Grace and Mercy for, and to make them eternally happy, he designs first to make them holy; and in order thereto, by his Holy Spirit convinceth them of Sin, and the Plague of their own Hearts: till therefore we find by real Effects that we are so convinc'd, and savingly renew'd and sanctify'd by the Spirit of Christ dwelling and abiding in us, we cannot know we are design'd to be happy either here or hereafter.

By what therefore hath been said, we may perceive what a gross and dangerous Mistake it is that they are under, who think there is no other Conversion than being baptiz'd, and taking upon them the outward Pro-

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230 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

cession of Christianity. Now that any should speak thus, and count all Trouble of Conscience about their eternal State, and looking after a Work of Grace upon their Souls, to be Enthusiasm, Melancholy, and Mopishness; shews their wonderful Ignorance of the Scriptures, and their utter Unacquaintedness with the Grace of God in their own Souls: when the Holy Scripture speaks so much of a new Heart and Spirit, of the taking away of the Heart of Stone, and giving us an Heart of Flesh, of writing the Laws of God in the Heart, of putting his Fear into our Hearts, of circumcising our Hearts, and of the necessity of being born again, and made new Creatures, of believing in Christ, of Repentance and Holiness, without which no Man shall see the Lord. As such Persons as these are utterly ignorant of the Case and Condition of Souls that are in spiritual Trouble and Fear of the Wrath to come, crying out, What shall we do to be saved? so they prescribe as strange Remedies for their Cure; as to be merry, to go into Company, to go to Cards, Play, and such-like: when if they get rid of their Trouble for Sin by such means, and be not brought to Christ, who only can give them Rest, and a saving Change be wrought thereby in their Hearts and Natures, according to the gracious Covenant that God made in him to Believers; their Remedy is worse than their Disease, and they had better continue in their Trouble of Spirit, than find Ease by such things.

This Grace of Faith, which produceth true and evangelical Repentance, and a thorow Change both of the Heart and Life, being so indispensibly necessary to our eternal Safety and Welfare; the Devil hath made many Counterfeits of it and of true Conversion: he cheats one with this, and another with that Appearance of it; and such a Craft and Artifice he hath in this Mystery of Deceit, that if it were possible he would deceive the very Elect. Now in order to the preventing and curing the dangerous Mistakes of any herein, who think they are converted, when they really are not; as well as to remove the Troubles and Fears of others, that think this saving Change hath not pass'd upon them, when indeed it hath; I shall endeavour,

I. To shew you the Nature of Conversion, both negatively what it is not, and the most usual Mistakes about

about it; and then positively, what it is: and lay down some Marks both of a Regenerate and of an Unregenerate State, in order to the Examination and Tryal of our selves. And,

(1.) It is not only the taking on us the Profession of Christianity. If the Lamp of Profession would have served the turn, the foolish Virgins had never been shut out: we find not only Professors, but such as were Preachers of Christ to others, and that had the Faith of Miracles also, turn'd off; having only a Profession, but being still Workers of Iniquity, *Matth. 25. 3, 12.* and *Chap. 7. 22, 23.* There are many that name the Name of the Lord Jesus, that yet depart not from Iniquity; that profess they know God, but in Works do deny him, *2 Tim. 2. 19. Titus 1. 16.* Such have a Name to live, but are really dead and condemned by Christ, and threatned to be spewed out, *Rev. 3. 1, 16.* These never truly receiv'd Christ, nor embrac'd him upon Gospel-Terms.

(2.) It is not the being washed in the Laver of Regeneration, or putting on the Badge of Christ in Baptism: Many take the Press-Money, and wear the Livery of Christ, that yet never stand to their Colours, nor follow their Leader. *Ananias and Saphira*, and *Simon Magus*, were baptized as well as the rest. How many deceive themselves herein, thinking that effectual Grace is necessarily ty'd to the external Administration of that Ordinance of Baptism; that every Infant is regenerated, not only sacramentally, but really and properly! (according to the Popish Tenet, of the Sacrament's working Grace, *ex opere operato.*) Hence Men fancy, that being regenerated already, when baptiz'd, they need no farther Work of Grace in their Hearts; and if this were so, then all that were baptiz'd in their Infancy, must necessarily be saved, the Promise of Pardon and Salvation being made to Regeneration: which is a middle Link in the Golden Chain, having Election at the one end, and Glorification at the other; *Rom. 8. 30. 1 Pet. 1. 2.* And indeed were this true, we need look no farther to see our Names written in Heaven, than only to search the Register, and see whether we were baptiz'd. This would be directly opposite to that Scripture, *Mat. 7. 14.* and multitudes of others; and we might, on the contrary say, Wide is

232 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

the Gate, and broad is the Way that leadeth unto Life: for if this were so, whole Parishes, nay whole Countries and whole Kingdoms, might go in a-breast: And it could no more be said, that the Righteous is scarcely sav'd, or that there is need of our endeavouring to take the Kingdom of Heaven by Violence, and striving to enter in, of seeking, knocking, fighting, and wrestling; which the Word of God requires as necessary, in order to our Salvation; or to say, that *few are chosen*, as the Scripture says; or, that *few there be that find it*: and that even of the professing Israel, but a *Remnant shall be saved*, *Mat. 22. 14. Rom. 11. 5.* For then how few should there be that miss it, tho the Lives of Multitudes that have been baptiz'd, do so plainly discover them to be in the broad Way that leads to eternal Destruction? The Covenant is in this sense Conditional, and therefore Baptism, which is the Seal of it, conveys conditionally also. The Covenant requires Faith, (which if true, produces Repentance, and other Graces) as the Terms of it, without which we cannot expect those great and unspeakable Benefits it conveys, of Life and Salvation, *Acts 16. 31. and 3. 19.* and what the Covenant doth not convey, the Seal cannot. Baptism presupposes the Grace of Faith and Repentance in the Subject, without which it doth not, nor can convey the saving Benefits; for the Seal cannot be contrary to the Covenant to which it is affixed. We find in all the express Instances of the Scripture, that Faith and Repentance are every where suppos'd in the Subjects, *Acts 8. 37. and 2. 38. and 10. 47. Mark 16. 16.* Those were all adult Persons that were at first baptiz'd, and suppos'd to have these Graces wrought in them, as they professed: and then their Children were baptized after them, and in their Right, and through them they were entitled to the Seal of the Covenant, and admitted by their Baptism also into the visible Church, *Acts 2. 39.* If the End of Baptism were to regenerate, there would be no reason to confine it only to the Seed of Believers, as we find it is; for both the Law of God and the Nature of Charity require us to use the Means of Conversion for all, as far as we can have Opportunity; and the Infants of *Turks* and Heathens would have the same Right to that Ordinance, which we see is confined only to the Seed of Believers;

and that no others have a Right unto it, till they profess their Faith in Christ. What hath been objected against this, in favour of that dangerous Error of baptismal Regeneration, as necessarily accompanying that Ordinance, (which under an appearance of Charity, is likely to be so destructive to ignorant Sinners) you may find fully answer'd in Mr. Allen's Treatise of Conversion, pag. 9, 10.

(3.) It lies not in mere Civility, and a moral Righteousness; I mean, in the Behaviour of a Person, whose Life as to Men is outwardly fair and civil, but hath no Conviction of the Evil and Danger of his Sins wrought in him, nor of the absolute Necessity of going out of himself to Christ for Pardon; but usually rests in his own Righteousness, and in performance of the Duties of the second Table, and is either negligent of, or slight and perfunctory in the Duties of the first, such as relate to God immediately; he labours to be righteous towards Man, but his Heart is very far from being truly religious towards God: He regards not the purging his Heart from secret Lusts; neither is the Glory of God his Aim, nor the Word of God his Rule; but his own Credit and Esteem is that which is most regarded by him: and many times there is some Sin or other (tho not gross and notorious) continu'd in with allowance. And sometimes there is found in such a Person a great dislike of the Practical Power of Godliness, esteeming it as singularity, and more ado than needs. All this exceeds not the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, and therefore cannot bring us to the Kingdom of God: *Mat. 5. 20. Except your Righteousness exceed the Righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Paul, while unconverted, was touching the Righteousness which is in the Law blameless, *Phil. 3. 6.* none could say black was his Eye, and yet a bitter Persecutor of the Church of God, *Acts 9. 1, 2.* The Self-Justiciary could say, *I am no Extortioner, Unjust, Adulterer, &c. Luke 18. 11.* But if we have not more than this, tho we may justify our selves herein, yet God will condemn us. I condemn not Morality, but let it caution and warn us not to rest there; true Piety includes Morality, as Christianity doth Humanity, and Grace Reason; but we must not divide the Tables.

(4.) It

234 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

(4.) It consists not in a mere formal, outward Religiousness, or in an external Conformity to the Rules of Piety: such Persons do usually rest in the bare Performance of religious Duties and Trust therein for their Acceptance with God, not minding the true End and Intent of them; which is, that their Souls may be better'd by them towards God, and in his sight: like the *Pharisee*, *Luke* 18. 9. who trusted in himself, and despised others. 'Tis too manifest, Men may have a Form of Godliness, without the Power, *2 Tim.* 3. 5. Men may pray long, *Mat.* 23. 14. and fast often, *Luke* 18. 12. and hear gladly, *Mark* 6. 20. and be very forward in the Service of God, tho' costly and expensive, *Isa.* 1. 11. and yet be strangers to Regeneration: They must have more than this to plead for themselves; there is no outward Service but a Hypocrite may do it, even to the giving all his Goods to the Poor, and his Body to the Fire, *1 Cor.* 13. 3.

(5.) It is not a mere restraint from Sin; or the chaining up of Corruption, by Education, human Laws, or by some present Affliction; and much less a being withholden by sense of Credit, or fear of Shame or Punishment; from the Commission of Sin; but the Heart in the mean time, hankering after it, and being inclined to it: so if it proceed merely from Restraint by Parents or Governors, commonly when those Restraints are remov'd, the Lusts of many break forth with great Violence. It is too common and easy to mistake Education for Grace; as *Jehoshaphat*, who while *Jehoiadab* his Uncle liv'd, was very forward in God's Service, and calls upon him to repair the House of the Lord; but when *Jehoiadab* dy'd, he appears to have been but a Wolf chain'd up, and falls off to Idolatry.

(6.) It consists not barely in Illumination or Conviction, in a superficial Change or partial Reformation; where there is only a slight Sorrow for past Sins, but no true Repentance wrought in them (which consists in the change of the Mind, Heart, and Life) when there is no serious Resolution to amend their Lives, or forsake what they know to be amiss in themselves. An Apostate may have been much inlightned, *Heb.* 6. 4. A *Felix* may tremble under Convictions, *Acts* 24. 25. and a *Herod* amend many things, *Mark* 6. 20. There is a common

Work

Work of the Spirit upon Men, as well as a special and saving Work of Grace in the Heart, as appears by many Scriptures; as those that are compared to the stony Ground, *Mat. 13.* and the foolish Virgins, *Mat. 25.* And the Apostle *Peter* shews, that some escape the Pollutions of the World, (in a sense) and yet return with the Dog to his vomit, are again intangled and quite overcome by their old Sins, and their latter End is worse than their Beginning. Some that in some measure have tasted of the Heavenly Gift, and of the Powers of the World to come, do yet fall away. Not that these Scriptures, or any other, hold forth a total and final Apostacy in any from special Grace, that are savingly regenerated and renewed; but only from common Grace. The Doctrine of the Certainty of the Perseverance of all sound Believers that are ingrafted into Christ, and indeed within the Covenant of Grace, shines forth so gloriously in the Scriptures, and from the Nature of the Covenant, and the Purchase that Christ hath made for them that are his; together with the Allsufficiency and mighty Power of God, who has undertaken and promised to keep them, that they shall not depart from him and perish: that there is scarce any part of Religion that has been controverted, that may be more easily defended against all Opposers.

But such Scriptures shew, that there is Common Grace as well as Special; so called, in that not only those that are saved, but those that perish, have many times such workings of the Spirit, as was before mention'd, which are again stifled by them, and become unfruitful and ineffectual.

Such may have a notional Knowledge and Utterance about these and other Points of Religion, from that Illumination of the Spirit, Conviction of Sin, and of their own Vileness thereby, and also of the Depravedness and Corruption of their Nature; and be affrighted under the Terrors of the Law, and some stop put also to Sin, (especially gross Sins) by this common Illumination, and the Convictions of the Spirit that sometimes appear in an unconverted Sinner; which lay some Restraint upon Sin, and put upon good Duties and Reformation of Life: and such a Sight and Sense of Sin, and Legal Repentance, ordinarily goes before that which is Evangelical,

236 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

lical, and is preparatory in the Soul to a sound Conversion; but yet these are not to be rested in: but our great care must be, that our Souls be rightly bottom'd upon Christ, that we be united to him by Faith, that he may be our Righteousness to justify us, and the only Fountain of Sanctification and Holiness to us. Some have had those common Workings of the Spirit, that are never savingly converted; but they are also in others preparing the way to that special Grace which the Lord purposes to bestow upon his People, and are in order to their Conversion.

Having treated hitherto of the dangerous Mistakes Persons may be under in this matter, which is of the greatest Concern and Importance to the Soul; and coming next to treat of this gracious Change, and to shew what special Grace and saving Conversion is: I shall first speak of the Nature of it; and give this short Description of it, *viz.*

That it is a Work of the Spirit upon the Soul, whereby the Habit, Principle, and Seed of all Grace is infus'd, changing and sanctifying the Heart; and the Sinner being brought to receive and rest wholly on Christ for Salvation, according to his gracious Covenant, does repent unfeignedly of all his Sins, and in a sincere Love to God, desires and endeavours to walk before him in Obedience and Newness of Life, according to his Will.

It lies in the thorow Change both of the Heart and Life, and is set forth to us, and called in Scripture by divers Expressions and Names.

As to its Beginning, when first wrought in the Heart, it's called,

1. Regeneration, or the New-Birth, *John 3. 3.* Had not Man degenerated from that excellent State and Condition wherein God made him, there would not have been that need of his being regenerated, as now there is. From hence it is, there is a necessity of the New Birth, *James 1. 18.* and *1 Pet. 1. 23.* It is called,

2. Conversion, *Mat. 18. 3.* *Acts 3. 19.* it being the Work of God upon the Soul, wherein Man is the Subject wrought upon by the Almighty Power of his Grace, *Phil. 2. 13.* and *Jer. 31. 18.* *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned.* Tho it is our Duty to be acting towards it, yet
Man

Man is an Agent in this great Work no further than he is enabled and assisted by Divine Grace, in turning his Heart to God. Hence it's said, [*Acti agimus*] in which sense only it is, that both God and Man may be said to be Agents in it, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. compar'd with *Chap.* 18. 31. Herein the Soul is turned,

(1.) From all known Sin and Disobedience, when this saving Change is wrought in it; *Isa.* 55. 7. and *Jer.* 26. 3.

(2.) From an inordinate Love of the World, as its chief Treasure and Happiness, so as not to be satisfy'd with these things, and to seek no other; *Gal.* 6. 14.

(3.) From trusting to his own Righteousness, *Phil.* 3. 9.

2. The Soul is turned unto God, to seek the Pardon of all his Sins from him, through the Merits of Christ; and it's turn'd to him by new Obedience and holy Walking.

3. 'Tis called frequently (especially in the New Testament) believing on Christ, *John* 1. 12. and 6. 29. *Rom.* 10. 10.

4. 'Tis stiled effectual Vocation, *Rom.* 8. 30.

5. Repentance unto Life, *Acts* 11. 18.

6. It is called the first Resurrection, from the Death of Sin to the Life of Grace; *Eph.* 2. 1, 5. *Rom.* 6. 4, 5.

Farther, considering it with respect to its Progress: It is express'd in the general by Sanctification, *Heb.* 12. 14. But more particularly, (1.) By a new Heart and a new Spirit, *Ezek.* 36. 26. (2.) By putting off the Old Man, and putting on the New, *Ephes.* 4. 22, 23. (3.) By being made new Creatures, *2 Cor.* 5. 17. *Gal.* 6. 15. (4.) It's called a dying unto Sin, and a living unto God, and walking in Newness of Life, *Rom.* 6. 4. (5.) It's also call'd Circumcision of the Heart, *Rom.* 2. 29. Labouring to put away, and to destroy the Lusts and corrupt Affections of the Heart, through Grace, *Deut.* 30. 6. (6.) A being led by the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 13. the Spirit of God therein guiding our Wills, Inclinations and Affections. (7.) Walking in Christ, *Col.* 2. 6. Having received him for our Redeemer, Lord and Saviour, so walking in him; framing our Hearts and Lives according to the Directions of his Word, in a believing Dependence upon his Grace, to enable us thereunto. (8.) It's express'd by having received

238 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

receiv'd the Spirit of Adoption, *Rom. 8. 15.* (9.) By being Christ's Workmanship created in him unto Good Works, *Ephes. 2. 10.* (10.) Having a Conversation becoming the Gospel of Christ, *Phil. 1. 27.*

And if we inquire further into the nature of this Change, we shall find,

1st. It is a real inward Change. It doth not consist in having some new Opinions, or odd Notions in Religion, but having a new and holy Nature: *Ezek. 36. 26.* *A new Heart and a new Spirit will I give you.* This Change is principally in the Soul, tho it reach to the outward Man also.

2^{dly}. It is a spiritual, not a mere moral Change; the Author of it is the Spirit of God: and therefore it's called the Sanctification of the Spirit, *2 Thess. 2. 13.* and the Renewing of the Holy Ghost; (yet not excluding the other Persons of the Trinity) compare *1 Pet. 1. 3.* and *Acts 5. 31.* with *2 Thess. 2. 13.* And what a blessed Change and Birth is this, which the whole Trinity is the Father of? but this Work is principally ascrib'd to the Holy Ghost; and so we are said to be born of the Spirit, *John 3. 8.* and from thence it is we have a spiritual Nature. A Person may leave off several of his former sinful Courses, and yet not be truly regenerate.

3^{dly}. 'Tis a Change upon all the Faculties, upon the Mind, Will, and Affections.

4^{thly}. It is a powerful Change; the Spirit of God works powerfully and efficaciously in this Change, and yet consistent with the Freedom of Man's Will, which is not forc'd thereto: but he first graciously enlightens their Minds, and convinces their Understandings of the Reasonableness and Necessity of this Change; and then sweetly and powerfully draws their Wills to consent to it.

The internal moving Cause of such a Change is only Free-Grace; *Not by Works of Righteousness which we have done,* (these, tho our Duty, yet are not the procuring Cause of it) *but of his own Mercy he saved us, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost; Tit. 3. 5.* *Of his own Will begat he us,* *James 1. 18.* God finds nothing in Man to turn his Heart; he sees enough in the fallen Creature to provoke his Loathing, nothing to provoke his Love: He finds us reeking in our Blood, *Ezek. 16. 6.* in our swi-

nish

nish Nature, dead in Trespasses and Sins, *Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3, 5.* When he is pleas'd to quicken us by his Holy Spirit, and says unto us, *Live*; how much should the real Christian then be taken up in admiring the Riches of his Grace, where such a Change is wrought? It's said to be according to the working of the same Almighty Power that rais'd up Christ from the dead. How affectionately doth the Apostle Peter express it, and praise him for it! *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of his abundant Mercy hath begotten us again*; *1 Pet. 1. 3.* And St. Paul also magnifies the free Grace and Mercy of God in it, *Eph. 2. 4, 5.*

The external Mover therein is the Merit and Intercession of the Blessed Jesus; he hath obtain'd Gifts for the Rebellious, *Psal. 68. 18.* and thro him it is that God works in us what is well-pleasing in his sight, *Heb. 13. 21. Eph. 1. 3.* he intercedes for the Elect that believe not, *John 17. 20.* All the Pains that he suffer'd on the Cross were our Birth-pains, and on our account, and thro him all spiritual Blessings are bestow'd upon us in heavenly things; *Eph. 1. 3.* He sanctify'd himself, that we might be sanctify'd; (he set himself apart as a Sacrifice, for that end) *John 17. 19.* and it is thro the offering of his Body once for all, *Heb. 10. 10.* It's nothing then without his own Bowels, and his Merit and Intercession, who was given by his Father for that end, that prevails now with him to bestow on us converting Grace. Hence there is a natural Affection in a Believer to Christ: If any in the World can shew that for our Hearts that Christ can, let them carry it. Doth Satan put in? Doth the World court thee? or doth any Sin sue for thy Heart? Why, were these crucify'd for thee? *1 Cor. 1. 13.* O Christian! let this excite thee to love and serve the Lord, while thou hast a Being.

The instrumental Means of such a Change, is the Ministry of the Word; *Rom. 10. 14. Faith cometh by Hearing. 1 Cor. 4. 15. In Christ Jesus have I begotten you thro the Gospel.* Christ's Ministers are they that are sent to open Mens eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God; *Acts 26. 18.* These are his Embassadors to a lost World, whose Errand and Business under Christ is to save us. By Peter's and the other Apostles preaching, the Jews were

240 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

pricked to the heart, and about three thousand converted. St. Paul is sent by our blessed Saviour to *Ananias* for Instruction, and an Angel to *Cornelius*, not to preach to him, but to direct him to send for a Preacher, because he would keep to his own standing Ordinance, and make use of his Ministers as his approved Means in order to this blessed Work. Look thro the whole Scripture, and we shall find the ordinary way of God's working upon his People, was by their hearing the Word preach'd; *Deut.* 32. 46, 47. And both Law and Gospel are appointed to be preach'd in order thereto: the Law, for by it is the Knowledge of Sin, *Rom.* 3. 20. It must be preach'd as a Rule of Life, but not as a Covenant of Works. The Law is holy and pure, it discovereth and condemns Sin, and so is a Schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, *Gal.* 3. 22. And for the Gospel, none will deny that it ought to be preach'd with all Seriousness and Diligence; it is the Power of God unto Salvation, *Rom.* 1. 16. *1 Pet.* 1. 25.

That these are the Means appointed by God for such great and gracious Purposes, is not because God cannot do the Work without any external Means, (for in elect Infants, and sometimes in others, he is pleas'd to work Grace without them) but it is merely from the Pleasure of his Will, what way he will take to convert a Soul, and wherein he will by his Almighty Power and Blessing concur, to make them effectual for a Sinner's Conversion.

Sometimes he is pleas'd to bless Afflictions to their awakening, and to the softening and preparing the Heart for this gracious Change, which he works by the preaching and reading of his Word.

Sometimes the holy and convincing Lives of the Saints have been blessed of God, to put ignorant and wicked Men upon Inquiry after Religion; convincing them of an Excellency in the Ways of God, and of the Blessedness and Peace that is to be found in them; *1 Pet.* 3. 1. Many in the primitive times observing the Patience and Joyfulness of the Martyrs in their sufferings for the Name of the Lord Jesus, and in his Cause, were convinced of the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion, and were converted unto God.

Sometimes

Sometimes also the Instructions of Parents and Masters have been blessed of God to the Conversion of their Children and Servants; and sometimes those Instructions have been brought to their Remembrance long after, when their Parents and Masters were in the dust; even those Instructions, which when first given took no Impression upon them. Many Children have found cause to bless God for such Education, and for praying Parents; and Servants, that the Lord by his Providence ever brought them into praying Families, and where they were instructed in the Ways of God. But the Word preach'd, as was mention'd before, is the most ordinary means of Conversion, thro the Blessing of the Lord thereon: the reading it our selves, or hearing it read by others, and likewise the reading of other good Books, have been blessed of God for that end, for the Conversion of Souls; and all these things are therefore to be diligently used: but the opening, urging, and applying the Doctrine of the Word by Preaching, is the stated and ordinary Means of Conversion; *Acts* 2. 37, 41. & 11. 21, 22. *Mat.* 28. 19. *2 Tim.* 4. 1, 2. And which way soever Conversion is wrought, as to the outward Means in any, yet the Lord is pleas'd to set home the same things upon their Hearts (for the substance) that are held forth to others: he shews them their sinful and miserable Estate by Nature and in themselves, and reveals Christ to them, as the only way of Justification and Acceptance with him.

Thus having shew'd the Way and Means by which this great Change is most usually wrought, I come now to consider the Evidences and Marks of true Conversion and Regeneration: they are such as these that follow, *viz.*

1. Where there is a new Birth, there is a new Life; where the Life of Grace is begun in any Soul, it may be discover'd by the Signs and Evidences of natural Life; which are four, *viz.* Breath, Sense, Motion, Appetite.

(1.) Examine then whether your Soul breathes in fervent Prayer to God. The first News we hear of *St. Paul* after his Conversion, is, *Behold he prayeth!* *Acts* 9. 11. Such a Soul pants after pardoning Mercy, and sanctifying Grace.

242 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

(2.) Sense. The new Convert hath new Senses; he feels Sin a burden, and is sick of it: the Remembrance of his former Sins and Follies is now painful to him, he has a Sense of the Evil and Danger of his Sins, and there is a true godly Sorrow and Remorse wrought in his Soul for them, and a Hatred and Displeasure against all Sin.

(3.) Motion. Doth your Soul move heavenward, and fly to Christ for Pardon? Men of the World do mind the things of the World, but he that is born of God, his Head, his Heart, his Judgment and Affections, carry him to mind the things of Heaven, and to secure his Title to it.

(4.) Appetite. Natural Life is accompany'd with Appetite: Is there in thee a Desire and Longing after the Food of Life? Is Christ, his Word, and Ordinances precious to thee; and dost thou relish the plain, evident, convincing Preaching of the Gospel? This is a sign of spiritual Life.

2. They that are truly regenerated and born again, have God's Image begun upon them; which consists in Knowledge, Holiness, and Righteousness: *Eph. 4. 24.* Such Persons desire to be more and more holy; God's Image is Holiness, but Wickedness, Profaneness, and Ungodliness is the Image of the Devil.

3. They that are truly regenerated, do not allow themselves in any known Sin: *1 John 3. 9.* *He that is born of God doth not commit Sin*; that is, doth it not deliberately, freely, delightfully, nor goes on in it as impenitent Sinners do.

But to come more closely to the matter in hand; there being only two Estates of the Soul towards God, either that of Nature or that of Grace, so that every one us must be either in the one or the other; let us consider who may for the present be reckon'd apparently unconverted, and who converted.

Besides those that are grossly wicked and impenitent Sinners, who carry their Marks in their Foreheads, they that may be reckon'd to be yet in an unconverted Estate, are,

1. Such as are grossly ignorant of the main Principles of the Christian Religion; *Isa. 27. 11.* *2 Thess. 1. 8.* *2 Cor. 4. 3.*

2. Such

2. Such as are insensible of the Evil and Danger of their Sins, neither have had any true Repentance or Remorse wrought in them for them.

3. Such in whose Heart Sin rules and reigns, so that they delight in it.

4. Those who have secret Reserves in closing with Christ.

5. Who have not in good earnest been brought to see their absolute Need of Christ, nor have solemnly and deliberately consented to receive and embrace him as their Lord and Saviour, and given up themselves to him, to be pardon'd thro his Mercy, and sanctify'd by his Spirit.

6. Such as disrelish and decline Holiness, and the Life and Power of Godliness; and have an Enmity in their Hearts against those as are holy, and desire to live a holy Life.

7. Such as delight in wicked Company, and chuse them before others for their chief Companions.

8. Such as are gross Neglecters of the Means of Grace which God hath appointed for the Conversion of Sinners, and for the further building up and edifying those that are already converted.

9. Such as have long enjoy'd the Means of Grace, but are nothing better'd thereby, that continue still unchanged and unreform'd.

10. Such as have the *main Bent* of their Hearts set upon the Pleasures, Profits, and Delights of the World.

11. Such as trust in their own Righteousness; *Röm.* 10. 3.

12. Such as rest in a certain pitch of Religion and Grace, as they suppose, without aspiring or labouring after farther Perfection; *Phil.* 3. 13. *Prov.* 4. 18.

13. Reigning Malice and Envy against those that disrespect them, or are injurious to them; where this Evil is kept boiling in the Heart, and is not hated, resisted, nor mortify'd, but doth habitually prevail: *Mat.* 18. 34,

35. *1 John* 3. 14, 15.

14. Unmortify'd Pride. When Men love the Praise of Men more than the Praise of God, and set their Hearts upon Mens Esteem, Applause, and Approbation; there is cause to suspect, such are yet in their Sins, and strangers to true Conversion: *John* 12. 43. *Gal.* 1. 10. When

244 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

Men see not, nor complain, nor groan under the Pride of their Hearts, it's a dangerous Symptom that that Sin is reigning there: and how secretly doth this live and bear rule when Men know it not, but are very strangers to themselves? *John 9. 40.*

Such as these above-mention'd seem for the present apparently in an unregenerate Estate, and strangers to the Covenant, till the Lord shall please by converting Grace to work an effectual Change in them.

We come now to consider, who they are that may upon good grounds judg themselves to be in a state of Grace.

1. Such as by the Grace of God have been spiritually enlightned, to see and be sensible of the Depravation of their Natures, and the great Sinfulness of their Hearts and Lives.

2. Such as have been brought in good earnest to see their absolute need of Christ, and have solemnly given up and committed their Souls to him, as their only and all-sufficient Saviour; expecting Pardon thro his Merits, and Sanctification thro the powerful Operation of his Holy Spirit.

3. Such as have had true godly Sorrow and Contrition wrought in them for their Sins.

4. Such as (thro the Assistance of Grace) do labour to mortify their inward Lusts and Corruptions, and to purify their Hearts from secret Sins.

5. Such as labour to be holy in all manner of Conversation.

6. Such as heartily love all the People of God, and such as are true Members of Christ's Holy Catholick Church.

7. Such as set a watch over themselves, viz. over their Thoughts, Affections, Words, and Actions, and their Aims and Ends, in all they do; that desire, and sincerely endeavour to keep a good Conscience both towards God and Man.

8. If thro Surprise or Violence of Temptation they at any time offend by Sin, they are not quiet under Guilt, but endeavour to renew their Peace with God by a speedy Repentance, and flying to Christ (by the fresh Application of his Blood) for the Pardon of it.

9. They

9. They do in their Judgments approve the Ways of God as most desirable and most eligible.

10. They would not be in an unrenew'd and unregenerate Estate again for all the World.

11. They earnestly desire to have this Change wrought in their nearest Relations, and desire it also in all others.

Where these Signs, Marks, and Evidences are found in truth and reality, we may safely judg such Persons to be in a state of Grace, and within the Covenant of Grace.

But in order to the preventing any Mistake herein, or the Discouragement of any (without sufficient ground from the Scripture) and also that wherever such a Change is wrought in any, they may the better discern what God has done for their Souls; let these things be observ'd,

1. That the Work of Grace is not always alike visible and discernible in those that are truly regenerate, neither to themselves nor others with whom they have to do, thro bodily Distempers, thro violent Temptations, thro sore Falls into Sin, and great Desertions and the Hidings of God's Face from them (from none of which, a Child of God is wholly exempted in this Life) so that a true Believer may be very hard put to it, to discern the Work of Grace in himself; nay, very much fear, that he hath not true Grace, and may walk long in Darknes and Trouble of Spirit thereupon. Now God orders it sometimes thus for wise and holy Ends, where he sees it needful; as that (besides what he sees needful for his Children themselves, who are sometimes kept long under such an Exercise, for their own advantage and benefit) by such Examples of troubled Consciences, others might be put more upon the trial of their spiritual Estates, and to draw forth our Pity and Compassion towards them. It may be also to make us more thankful for the Light of God's Spirit, to discern the Work of Grace in our selves, and to shew us also that which I am now upon, that Grace being so little in the best, is sometimes scarce discernible; especially when the Body is sickly and distemper'd, and there is some special Hour and Power of Darknes upon us.

And by the way it's to be fear'd, Godly Ministers may sometimes speak so unwarily of the Signs of this and the other Grace, that those Signs they lay down are Signs

246. *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

only of the high Actings of that Grace, and not to be brought in as Evidences of the Truth only of it. Thus *Abraham, David, and Peter*, sometimes acted above themselves, thro the powerful Help of Divine Grace; and yet sometimes acted as much below themselves, thro the Power of Temptations, and the Remainder of Corruption that was in them. He therefore that will not lay a Stumbling-block before the Weak, in speaking of these things, must carefully distinguish between what a sincere Believer is in his Principles, Desire and Bent of his Heart, in which he is holy and gracious (for the Law of God is in his Heart) and what he is or may be in some particular Acts, in which he may discover many Failings; between what a Child of God should be, and in the unfeigned Desire and Bent of his Heart would be; and what he is and attaineth to in this Life: between what he is at some times (thro Grace strongly assisting) and what he is at other times, when the Lord leaves him (in part) to himself, for his Humiliation, and that he may see what is in his Heart. The Life of Grace in the Hearts of Believers is a great Mystery; the Flesh opposeth the Spirit, and the Spirit the Flesh in them, as the Apostle *Paul* himself experienc'd, *Rom. 7*. So that as ignorant and presumptuous Sinners must be dealt with accordingly, in order to their awakening; so care must be taken in dealing with tender Consciences, not to break the bruised Reed, nor to quench the smoking Flax.

2. In trying our spiritual Estate by Signs of a Work of Grace in the Heart, it's best ordinarily to try our selves about the main things wherein a Work of Grace doth chiefly consist; as to try whether we have true Faith in Christ, true Repentance, true Love to God, &c. for where there is one Grace in truth, there is all, (at least in the Habit) and a multitude of Signs are, thro the Weakness of some Christians, apt to confound them.

3. In trying our selves we must pray for the Light of the Spirit, to shew us those Graces that he hath wrought in us; otherwise it will be hard to discern them.

4. The stronger the Habit of Grace in the Heart is, and the more frequent and constant the Actings of Grace are, the more easily we may come to the certain Knowledge and Assurance of them.

5. Be-

5. Believers must not be taken up wholly in trying themselves, whether they are in a state of Grace or no; but press forward in putting forth new Acts of Faith, of Repentance, Love to Christ, and other Graces, new Acts of Mortification of Sin, &c. that they may grow up into him in all Grace, who is our Head, even Christ.

These things premis'd, to prevent the Discouragement of weak Christians, and the making sad any sincere and righteous ones, whom God would not have made sad; let us now consider what great Reasons there are that we should not only pursue and hasten after such a Change in our selves and ours, by regenerating Grace; but also that we should labour after the greatest Certainty and Assurance thereof, that we can attain unto:

2 Pet. 5. 1—12. For consider,

(1.) There can be no Communion with God without it: his holy Nature will never be reconcil'd to Sinners, whilst going on in their Sins; he is said to hate all the Workers of Iniquity. As he will not reward them with Heaven at last, so he cannot delight in them here, except they be holy; neither can we delight in approaching to him, if our Hearts be unconverted and un sanctify'd.

(2.) We cannot in this World do him any acceptable Service. Unconverted Persons do not answer the End of their Creation, which was to glorify God, and serve him faithfully in the World.

(3.) Our Life can never be safe, nor rationally secure, except we be regenerated. Methinks a Man that finds himself in an unrenow'd Estate, should have little Joy or Comfort in his Life, seeing he knows not (if he continue in that state) how soon he may be thrown down into Hell. When you look upon your Fields, your Estates, Possessions, Wife, Children, and the best of your Enjoyments; if this one damping Thought come into your mind, *But I am not yet converted, and so my Soul is not safe*; what Comfort can you have in all other things?

(4.) Without Conversion and being savingly renew'd, we are not capable of Heaven: *Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*, Heb. 12. 14. & Rev. 21. 27. Into the New Jerusalem no wicked unregenerate Sinner can possibly enter. It is not all Sinners that shall perish (for then all would perish) but all unconverted Sinners, that

248 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

will most certainly perish: as sure as the Word of God is true (which is Truth it self) every Soul that goes out of the Body in an unconverted State, will be eternally miserable.

Now what are some of the great Impediments and Hindrances of a true Conversion, and such a thorough Change, with Reasons against your Delay herein; I shall only hint here very briefly, and refer you to the farther Enlargement of them in the Reverend Mr. *Cradock's Knowledge and Practice*, p. 254, &c. And they are,

1. Want of Consideration and frequent serious Self-examination; when Persons will not think seriously on the things that concern their Salvation, nor suffer them to sink into their Minds and Hearts.

2. Gross Ignorance of those Truths that usually are the great Means (in the Hand of the Holy Spirit) of Regeneration.

3. Unbelief, and Hardness of Heart, through Custom in Sin; by this, Men lose their Understandings and Judgments, *Hosea* 4. 11.

4. The inordinate Love of the World: Where this is predominantly loved by any, the Love of the Father is not in him, *1 John* 2. 15. When we have our Minds possess'd with worldly Cares, and wholly taken up with worldly Contrivances and Businesses, there is little room for the matters of Heaven or another Life; tho that is the one thing most absolutely needful, *Luke* 10. 42.

5. Mistakes also about the Nature of true saving Faith in Christ, and of true Repentance; thinking a little Sorrow for Sin is sufficient for it, and a confident presuming they shall be saved by Christ: tho that Faith they seem to have, neither purifies the Heart, nor reforms the Life.

6. The great Differences among Professors of Religion, and the scandalous Lives of some that do profess it, may be a hindrance also herein; whereas if things be duly consider'd, those Differences will not be found so great as some People imagine and are willing to suppose: for as long as we agree in Fundamentals, we are all of one Religion, notwithstanding our Differences. And tho some Professors of Religion may be still bad Men, as *Judas* was amongst the Twelve, yet this is far from what Christianity allows; it utterly rejects and condemns

denies all Wickedness and Hypocrisy wherever it is. It's the want of the Truth of Religion, and of what they profess, that is the occasion of it.

7. They whose Condition of Life exposes them to strong Temptations and Occasions of sinning, are under great Impediments of a sound Conversion.

8. The Neglect of Parents and Masters of Families, in timely instructing those that are under their Care in the true Grounds and Principles of Christianity, and acquainting them with the great Obligation that they are already under by their baptismal Covenant. For tho' the Lord is not ty'd to Means, but works in the Hearts of Sinners when, and as he pleases; yet ordinarily he doth it in the use of the Means that are of his own Appointment; and he is pleas'd to honour those Means, and to make them successful by his Blessing upon them: and we cannot expect that saving Change to be wrought, either in our selves or ours, in the wilful neglect of any of the Means of Grace that he hath appointed. Parents therefore, whatever they fail in, should not fail in this; for *without Knowledge the Heart cannot be good*: and much less should Children have any Discouragement, when they are found in the way of their Duty: Most of the world are such as they were taught to be in their Childhood, and they are not easily chang'd from the way they are bred up in; *Prov. 22. 6.*

9. When Convictions and good Inclinations are not follow'd on, but suffer'd to die and come to nothing: commonly there are preparatory Workings of the Spirit, and Convictions of Sin, before saving Faith is wrought; and if these were cherish'd and follow'd on, they might the sooner see a blessed Issue thereof.

10. Delays in leaving off and forsaking known Sins, is also a great Hindrance of Conversion. He that is not willing to part with his Sins presently, it's a sign he would never part with them if he might have his desire. There are many great and urgent Reasons against such Delays. For,

(1.) Consider who it is to whom you are invited to turn; it is to God, who hath been doing you good all your days, and in whom all things that are truly good are summ'd up for his People, the greatest of the Angels in Heaven are made happy and blessed in his Favour:

250 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

your: And we cannot but suppose the very Devils themselves, that tempt others to neglect and make light of it, would be glad of it themselves, if they were under any possibility of obtaining it.

(2.) Consider from whom, and from what, you are invited to turn; why, from the Devil, and Sin, your greatest Enemies, to whom you owe all the Misery that ever you felt: Sin is at the Root of all Evil, and the only Cause of the Destruction of all that perish.

(3.) Consider what it is you are invited to turn unto, viz. to real Holiness and Godliness, the very Life of Heaven, and the gainfullest Employment in the World; 1 Tim. 4. 8. It's that wherein the Creature's Felicity and Happiness (next unto God himself, whose Image it is) doth chiefly consist. A Life of Grace and holy Obedience here, is the sowing of that good Seed which will afford a sure and blessed Harvest hereafter. Wicked Men are indeed ready to find faults in the Godly, but let them find Faults with true Godliness if they can. Sin is that which laid the Foundation of Hell; but when you are called from Sin to Holiness, you are called to the Porch of Heaven, and to the beginning of Eternal Life in Bliss and Happiness.

(4.) Consider in what a miserable Condition you are while unregenerate, you are under the Wrath of God, Slaves of Satan, and Heirs of Hell; and is this a State to be continu'd in? If a Man was up to the knees in Water at the side of the Sea, and saw the Tide coming in furiously upon him, surely he would turn, or else he could not escape drowning. The case is thus with every unregenerate Sinner.

(5.) Your delay to leave your Sins and to turn to God, is an interpretative preferring Sin before God. It's a Contempt of the blessed Motions of his holy Spirit, which may provoke him to leave you to your self; and then what will become of you? Terrible are those Words of God, Ezek. 24. 13. *Because I have purged thee, i. e. used several means to purge thee, and thou wast not purged from thy filthiness, thou shalt not be purged any more, till I cause my Fury to rest upon thee.*

(6.) Consider, the longer you delay, your Conversion will be the more difficult; Custom in Sin will harden your Heart more, and make you slight the Means of Grace,

Grace, and your Hearts harder to be wrought upon by them.

(7.) Consider how uncertain your Life is, and how certainly Death is making its approach to the youngest of you: And (supposing your continuance should be long in the World) how much greater Hindrances will the Condition of old Age be attended with? Delaying therefore, now puts you upon the greatest Hazards; you are not sure of living till to-morrow: God's Spirit will not always strive with the Children of Men. And 'tis sad to consider, how few old People that have long and wilfully delay'd, are ever savingly wrought upon. God's usual time of working Grace in the Heart, is, whilst Persons are young, and before the Devil and the World have got too much Possession of their Hearts, before they have long resisted his Grace.

(8.) The longer Repentance is deferred, the more you increase your Sins, and God's Displeasure against you for them; and are you not deep enough in God's Debt already? There is reason to believe many Souls that are now in Misery, had Purposes of repenting and turning to God hereafter: And on the other hand, whenever any have truly repented and turned from their Sins to God, that they could have unfeignedly wished they had done it sooner.

(9.) In things of great Concern in the World, it is not usual to neglect and delay them: if you was under a dangerous Disease, you would think it Wisdom to look out for timely help; and will you be slack in getting out of the Power of the Devil, or fear being too soon the Children of God and Heirs of Heaven, and being made happy and blessed in his gracious Covenant?

(10.) Can you that hope to be accepted and pardon'd upon your Repentance and Return to God, be so basely disingenuous to go on offending him longer, from whom you profess to expect a Pardon? and to ask Liberty, for a while to prefer the World and the Flesh before him?

(11.) Consider how much it will then grieve you, when your Hearts are once savingly chang'd, and come to be melted and overcome with a Sense of God's pardoning Mercy in Christ, to think you have withstood so long that tender Compassion of his, that hath been seeking to save you, and so often before been calling upon you,

252 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

you, *Turn you, turn you, why will you die?* And now to close all that hath been said on this Subject, I shall only add some few Directions, to those that have been laid down in the first Part [*of the Terms of the Covenant*] that may be useful to such as are unconverted, or that upon due Examination of themselves, fear, that for the present they are so.

1. Humble your selves deeply before the Lord, under a sense of your original and actual Sins; and cast your selves down before him with great Importunity at the Throne of Grace, that he will please to work this saving Change upon your Hearts by his Holy Spirit; that he will work the Work of Faith with Power, and all those Graces of his Spirit in you which accompany Salvation; and that you may be faithful and stedfast in his Covenant; and encourage your selves with that gracious Promise, *Luke II. 9.* that he will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him.

2. Study Christ, as reveal'd to Sinners in the Gospel, and tender'd to such, as a mighty and all-sufficient Saviour, who was *delivered for the Offences, and raised again for the Justification* of lost and perishing Sinners. Search the Scriptures, for they testify of him; they tell you what he is, and what he hath done and suffer'd, that he might bring us to God. Look to him, and close with him, and give up thy self wholly to him; commit thy Soul solemnly and deliberately into his hands as thy Lord and Saviour, with respect to all those Offices which he hath graciously undertaken for Sinners (*that come unto him*); and thus taking hold of his Covenant, rest fiducially on his Merits, for the obtaining the Pardon of all your Sins; and beg Grace from him, to renew and sanctify your Hearts and Natures, according to his gracious Covenant. He bestows himself freely upon poor Sinners, that thirst for this *Water of Life*.

The best Qualification you can have for receiving Christ, is, to see your need of him, and that you are altogether unworthy of him: Let not your Sins, which now you see, the multitude or heinousness of them, drive you from Christ; but let them drive you to him, and make you hasten the more to this City of Refuge, where you may find Safety. His Blood cleanseth from all Sin, his Righteousness is able to cover all your Unrighteousness;

righteousness; come but to him with a true Heart, to give him all the Glory of your Salvation, and to desire now to have him reign over you, and fear not; he is mighty to save; never any Patient came to this Physician, and missed of Cure: Under all thy spiritual Ulcers, running Sores and bloody Issues of Sin, which are now thy burden, and thou sincerely desirest the healing of them, touch the Hem of his Garment by Faith, and there is Virtue enough in him to make you whole. Satan may endeavour to puzzle you with many Doubts and Jealousies, as if it were now too late to look after Christ, who before endeavour'd as much to keep up your Presumption, as if you had no need of him: But do not you perceive the Hand of Satan is in all this? He cannot endure you should hear of Salvation in Christ, lest you should come unto him that you may be safe.

3. Set your selves seriously (through the strength of Christ and his Grace) to reform whatever you find amiss in your selves.

4. Set a watch over your selves daily, viz. over your Thoughts, over the Motions of your Hearts and Affections, over your Words, and over your outward Behaviour and Conversation; that so you may behave your selves as becomes the Children of God.

5. Earnestly beg of the Lord to guide you continually by his Grace in the way of Truth and Holiness, and that you may persevere therein to the End of your Days.

And as for you, who through the Grace of God, upon serious Inquiry into the State of your Souls, find your selves in a converted State; and that this saving Change hath (by the Almighty Power of his Holy Spirit) been wrought in you; consider,

(1.) How much the Lord hath done for you, and what great Obligations he hath laid upon you, to endeavour to walk before him in Uprightness, Sincerity and Holiness, all your Lives.

(2.) Labour after the Conversion of others, *Luke*
22. 32.

(3.) Stir up all that is within you to bless and praise the Lord for so transcendent a Mercy, and for the exceeding Riches of his Grace. Methinks all truly regenerate Persons should break out into some such holy Thankgiving

254 *Of sound Conversion and Regeneration,*

giving as that mention'd *Rev. 7. 12. Amen : Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen.* Blessing to the Lord for ever for his converting Grace, and for the secret Illapses of his Holy Spirit into my Soul, that he hath shewed me the Evil and Danger of my Sins, and inclin'd my Heart to turn from them to himself : That he has been pleas'd to reveal his Son savingly to me, making me willing in this day of his Grace and Almighty Power, to receive and embrace him as my Lord and only Saviour ; and to commit my Soul to him accordingly, as he is tender'd to Sinners in the Gospel.

Let such be contented, yea, rejoice and be thankful, whatever outward Troubles and Afflictions lie upon them, when his Grace hath so much abounded towards them ; the Lord hath not dealt so with many others : Look round about you, and see what multitudes lie in Wickedness, in gross Ignorance and Profaneness, and live as without God in the World. Rejoicing in the Lord and Praising him continually, are comely for those that are converted and pardon'd in and through Christ. *O sing and give praise ; be thankful unto him, and bless his Name for working in your Heart a love of Holiness : and look unto him in the diligent use of all his appointed Means, to carry on and perfect it more and more in you ; to inable you sincerely to honour and serve him here ; and that through his infinite Mercy, upon the account of your blessed Redeemer, you may be brought to the Souls of the Just made perfect, where you shall praise, and adore, and magnify him for ever.*

(4.) After God hath once given you a comfortable Assurance of your Conversion, do not call all in question, upon every fit of deadness and darkness that comes upon your Spirits ; be humbled for the least Sin, but say not upon every spiritual Fall, If there had been Truth of Grace, you had never done thus : for after Conversion there remaineth in this Life, Flesh and Corruption, that is not wholly taken away till Death : Then indeed the House of the old Man will quite fall, and all these *Philistines* die with us. This makes Believers mourn and groan under it, and desire Death, that their Lusts may die too.

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Neither call your State into question because of outward Afflictions, how great and many soever they are; for *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and correcteth every Son whom he receiveth*: But say in your Hearts, the Lord hath humbled me for my Sins, hath put his Fear into my Heart, and given me many times gracious intimations of his Favour to me in Christ; and now, tho he seem to walk contrary to me in some outward Dispensations, breaking me in my Relations, in my Estate, my Esteem, or in my Health (as it was with *Job*) yet will I trust in him; and say, that still he is my Father, and will not always chide nor retain his Anger for ever.

(5.) Let those that are converted hate every false Way, and meddle with Sin no more: the State of Grace is so far from giving any liberty to Sin, that it lays the greatest Obligation upon us to Holiness. Have a care of the Sins of the Days wherein you live, of your own Bosom Iniquities, Worldliness, unprofitable Talk, and mispence of Time, Bitterness against those that differ never so little from you; and abundance of other Sins, that are too rife and common even among some that make a Profession of Religion.

(6.) Shew forth the Praises of him that hath called you out of Darkness into his marvellous Light; shew forth his Praises not only in Words, but in Works glorify him on Earth; let not his high and holy Name be blasphem'd through you; be exceeding tender of the Name and Glory of God; make not Religion to stink, and the Savour of it to be abhorred by any loose Conversation; adorn the Profession of it with a serious Chearfulness, a meek Zeal, a heavenly Diligence in your Callings, and with a loving and yet a convincing Conversation to the World. These things may well go together, and should do so; Christians should be serious and yet chearful; they have most cause to rejoice, and shall do it when others shall weep and howl, and gnash their Teeth. Christians should be meek, gentle, peaceable, easy to be intreated; and yet zealous, magnanimous, and valiant for the Truth. They should be heavenly in their Thoughts, and Affections, and Discourse, and yet diligent in their outward Callings; Heavenly-mindedness makes the Yoke of outward Labour easier, and the Burden of it lighter. They should hold forth the Grace of

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Christ through their whole Conversations, that others may be convinc'd they are the Children of God; and tho possibly they may rail at them with their Mouths, yet may secretly commend and approve of them in their Consciences, and with their Death and last End may be like theirs:

CHAP. II.

Of Repentance.

HAVING shew'd the Necessity of Regeneration and sound Conversion to God, together with the Nature of the New Birth; both negatively what it is not, and the most usual Mistakes about it, and then positively what it is; and laid down some Marks, both of a Regenerate and Unregenerate Estate, in order to the Examination and Trial of our selves, what our State is, (that we may not be mistaken therein) and whether we are indeed interested in this gracious Covenant of Life and Peace: I come now to speak of those two Fundamental Graces, of Faith and Repentance, in order to a more thorough Search and Examination of our selves particularly, concerning them; these Graces being the two vital constituent Parts of a Christian, implying the whole Work of Grace in the Soul, *Luke 13. 5. and 15. 10. Acts 3. 19. and 11. 18.* wherein the Sum of the Gospel lieth. And tho Faith is the Initial and Fundamental Grace of a Christian (from whence all other Graces spring) yet there is so necessary a Connexion between these Graces, that they cannot be separated wherever either of them is wrought in truth in any Soul: as where there is the Grace of saving Faith, it always produceth and is accompany'd with sincere and sound Repentance; so wherever this Grace of Repentance appears to be in Truth in any Heart, it is the Fruit and an undeniable Evidence of saving Faith. They grow up together as different Branches from the same Root that bears and feeds them both, viz. the sanctifying Operation of the Holy Spirit. But tho this (not indeed any

any other saving Grace) cannot be separated from true Faith, yet they must be carefully distinguished; *Act. 20. 21.* They have their distinct Offices and Influences, and receive different Denominations from the different Objects and Occasions about which they act: as Faith acts upon Christ for an Interest in his Righteousness, so Repentance acts towards God, acknowledging our own Unrighteousness and bewailing it; we cannot rejoice in the Righteousness of Christ, till we mourn for our Sins, being made truly sensible of them. Christ reconciles God to Sinners by the Atonement he has offer'd, and which they lay hold on by Faith, *2 Cor. 5. 19, 20, 21.* and he reconciles us to God, by working Repentance in us, who were Enemies in our Minds to him by wicked Works, *Col. 1. 20.* Faith works upwards, by holding up the Blood of Christ to appease God's Wrath; and Repentance works downwards upon our selves, in changing our Minds towards God, that we may be conformable to his Will, and rebel no more against him. As Faith lifts up and comforts a guilty Sinner upon one account, (being made weary of his Sins, and burden'd under them) so Repentance humbles the Sinner and lays him low upon another account, filling him with godly Sorrow, Humiliation, and Contrition for them. And lastly, as by Repentance we return to God, from whom, by Sin, we had revolted; so by Faith we thankfully accept and embrace the Means thereto, and of all those saving Benefits which Christ hath purchas'd as our Way, and in order to our return to him. It is a believing Acceptance of Christ, that he may bring us to God: *Acts 20. 21. Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* I shall begin therefore, in respect to this Duty of Self-examination, with the Grace of Repentance, that thereby a saving and thorough Change in us may be the more clear and evident to us: For if we find this Grace in truth, it will be a certain Evidence that our Faith in Christ, which we profess, is sound and saving. And whosoever considers (as he ought) in what a happy and sinless Condition God made Man at first, and for what glorious Ends; how righteous and holy a Law he hath given us to be our Rule; and shall then compare his Heart and the Actions of his Life, with that holy Law

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and Rule ; must needs find himself a guilty Sinner, and Transgressor against the Lord, and so liable and obnoxious to his righteous Judgment and Wrath, which he hath reveal'd from Heaven against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men. And tho we are now utterly unable to recover our selves, by any Strength of our own, out of this sinful and miserable Condition ; yet it hath pleas'd the Lord, of his infinite Grace and Mercy, to reveal unto fallen and sinful Man a way how he may return and make his peace with him, if he will but lay down those Weapons of Hostility that have been so long lifted up against him, and submit himself to the Terms of his Grace and Mercy ; if we will return to our Obedience to him, and expect our Help and Discharge from his Grace in Christ, which he has so freely offer'd us in the Covenant of Grace. How much therefore doth it concern us all to make sure that the Grace of Repentance is indeed wrought in our Hearts ; and with incessant Importunity at the Throne of Grace, humbly to beg of the Lord to work it, and the Work of Faith with Power in us by his Holy Spirit, if upon search and examination of our selves we find it yet wanting ; and to increase and strengthen it in us, if we have good ground to hope it is already wrought ? for it is the Gift of his Grace, the Purchase of the precious Blood of Christ ; he hath meritoriously procur'd it for all on whom it is bestow'd. We have need of a Saviour to procure the Grace of Repentance for us, as well as the Pardon of our Sins ; *Acts 5. 31. Him hath God exalted with his Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance unto Israel, and Forgiveness of Sins.* In the Gospel he gives us leave to repent, *Acts 11. 18.* and calls us to it, *Mat. 3. 2.* to own that great Benefit offer'd to us therein, and to return to that Duty which we owe to our Creator : and by the effectual working of his Holy Spirit, he inclines and moves our Hearts to obey that outward Calling, in forsaking our Sins and turning to the Lord by true Repentance ; which is an inexpressible Mercy. The Law knew nothing of it ; the Law doth not say, *I will not the Death of a Sinner, but that he turn and live ;* the Law says, *Do and live, Sin and die :* but it is the blessed Voice of the Gospel. And that Grace he calls to, he bestows ; and gives Repentance it self, whereby

whereby our Hearts are savingly wrought upon and chang'd: *2 Tim. 2. 25.* It is according to the working of that Almighty Power that rais'd up the Lord Jesus from the Dead, whereby he is pleas'd to work in the Hearts of all that believe, and in whom Repentance is wrought. They are both of them the free Gift of his Grace.

Tho the Work and Duty is ours, we are to believe and to repent also; our Souls must exert and put forth these Acts, as we are to act all other Graces that are wrought in us: it were an absurd thing to imagine that Christ should do these things for us; they are Acts necessarily to be perform'd by our selves. But the Grace and Power to do them is bestow'd on us by him who has promis'd in the Covenant to help, and by his Holy Spirit enables to the performance of them: and this is the way the gracious Gospel has prescrib'd, in order to the Enjoyment of all the Privileges of the New Covenant. God and Christ agreed that Salvation should be dispens'd upon these Terms; and the whole Frame and Tenour of the Gospel is consonant hereunto, to invite Sinners to Repentance thro Faith in a Redeemer; *Luke 24. 47.* Some indeed have disputed whether Faith and Repentance are equally Terms of the Covenant of Grace: but however both of them are indispensibly necessary, and have their distinct and special Use in some respects. It is the former of these [*Repentance*] which is here to be spoken to; for the Gospel finding us involv'd in Sin, and out of our way, it's necessary that we should change our Course, if we will receive benefit by it: it is that which all the Prophets and Apostles were continually calling and exhorting to, and our blessed Lord and Saviour Christ himself (as *John* also his Forerunner did before him) begun his Ministry with this Doctrine; *Mat. 4. 17.* He was continually inculcating of it; and accordingly at his last farewell Ascension into Heaven, in an especial manner he recommended the preaching and pressing of it to his Disciples; *Luke 24. 47.* that Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preach'd in his name among all Nations. It's join'd with the Remission of Sins, so that none without the one can warrantably expect the other: and it being suitable to all Sorts and Conditions of Men, Repentance being proper to Sinners, I came to call Sinners to Repentance; none can exempt them-

themselves from the reach of this Duty, unless we can free our selves from the Guilt, Defilement, and Abode of Sin, which we always carry about with us; therefore it must be preach'd to all.

Now concerning the general Nature of Repentance, I conceive it may be describ'd thus: That it is a supernatural Grace of the Holy Spirit, whereby a believing Sinner is so truly humbled for Sin, that he turns from it to the Lord: he returns to him from whom he had departed. It is a turning of the whole Heart from Sin and Satan, to serve God in Newness of Life; implying that Sinners are out of the way to God, and their own Happiness, till by Repentance they return into it. There is in it (as in every Action) two Terms, *a quo* and *ad quem*: *Acts 8. 22. Repent of [or from] thy Wickedness, Sine & relax.* And it is to God, *Acts 26. 18. To turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God: to Holiness and Newness of Life, Rom. 6. 4. and to Life it self, Acts 11. 18.* It's call'd *Repentance unto Life*: it is not a partial turning, or in the Life only, as a Hypocrite may do; but from all Sin both of Heart and Life, as to the Love and Allowance of it, and Subjection to it: and a turning to God as our sovereign Lord, from whom we had revolted, to walk with him in all known ways of Obedience and Holiness. And tho we cannot attain to a legal Perfection in this Life, either as to Freedom from all Sin, or the Practice of all Duty; yet there is not only a transient, but a peremptory, fixed, and settled Purpose for the one, and against the other. It amounts to a present Breach with all Sin, and an actual Will to engage in every Duty; a Respect to all God's Commandments, *Psal. 119. 6.* in the degree of our Obedience to which, we notwithstanding may oftentimes fail.

There is a general Repentance, which consists in the putting off *the Body of the Sins of the Flesh*, *Col. 2. 11.* when we first renounce all Sin, and devote our selves to God, as is before mention'd: And there is a particular Repentance, for any provoking Sin; *Acts 8. 22.*

Again, there is an initial Repentance at our first Conversion out of the broad way, call'd Repentance from dead Works; because all the Works, even the best Works before, were dead Works, coming from Men wholly

wholly dead in their Sins: and it is our passing from Death unto Life, our Entrance by the straight Gate; *Mat. 7. 14.*

And then there is a progressive, continu'd, and renew'd Repentance afterward, which belongs to our walking in the narrow way. For after Conversion we need it still, and not in our natural Estate only: it's not only necessary for an unregenerate Sinner, yet unreconcil'd to God, without which he cannot expect any Peace with him, and to partake of the Benefits of the Covenant of Grace; but also for a Believer, till his full and final Recovery. I shall speak of both these in their order.

First, An initial Repentance, wherein by the effectual working of the Blessed Spirit, our Hearts are inclin'd and mov'd to obey the Voice of Christ in the Gospel, calling us to forsake our Sins, and to turn to the Lord: and in order thereto, there is wrought in the Heart by the Holy Spirit, (in whose Hand and Strength, let our Souls be accordingly labouring, reaching, and pressing after) these following Parts and gracious Acts of it.

1st. Conviction of Sin. 'Tis the Spirit of God who first opens a Sinner's eyes, and convinces him of Sin; *John 16. 8.* and makes him to see, (1.) The Odiousness and Filthiness of Sin, as that which is contrary to God's holy Nature; its chief Malignity lying in its direct Opposition and Contrariety to the holy Nature and Will of God. (2.) As being contrary to his righteous Law. (3.) As that which defaces God's Image in the Soul, consisting in Knowledg, Righteousness, and perfect Holiness. (4.) As that which depraves, disorders, and distempers the Faculties of the Soul, weakens its Powers, disables it for holy Operations, and brings a corrupt Disposition into it. (5.) As that which defiles the Soul, and leaves such a stain and blot upon it, that nothing less than the Blood of Christ can wash out. Christ crucify'd, and dying for it, is the Glas that doth most clearly shew the Odiousness of Sin. (6.) As that which enslaves the Soul to the Devil, and makes it resemble and be like unto him. Holiness is God's Nature, Sin and Wickedness is the Devil's. 'Twas Sin that at first turn'd Angels of Light into Devils; and if it were possible

to separate Sin from them, they would cease to be Devils, and become again glorious Spirits.

2. The Sinner is convinc'd of the Danger, Desert, and sad Consequents of Sin; having it represented and discover'd to him, how Sin makes the Soul liable to the Wrath and Curse of God, and to dreadful Punishments. (1.) Temporal, such as are Sickness, Pain, Vexation, Misery and Death; which to the Wicked are truly Punishments, and Fruits of God's vindictive Justice, and have their Sting still in them. (2.) Spiritual, such as are Loss of the Favour of God, and Communion with him, the immediate Strokes of his Anger upon the Soul, Drops of his Wrath, Horror of Mind, and Anguish therein, Despair, Blindness of Mind, Hardness of Heart, a reprobate Sense, and to be given over to vile Affections and Lusts; nay, to Satan himself, to be led captive at his Will. All these are most direful Judgments. (3.) Eternal, such as concern the other Life; and they are either Punishments of Loss, in being for ever banish'd from the Presence of the Lord, and the Joys of Heaven and everlasting Glory; or of Pain, consisting in those unconceivable Torments, which shall be inflicted on the Damned, set forth in Scripture by everlasting Fire, utter Darkness, the Worm that never dies, Chains of Darkness, and Blackness of Darkness for ever, and the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. As therefore the Nature of Sin is out of measure sinful, so the Punishments of Sin are out of measure dreadful.

3. The Sinner is by the Holy Spirit also convinc'd of his own deep Guiltiness, both of original, and innumerable actual Sins.

1. Of original Sin. For the understanding of which, three things are to be noted; (1.) The Guilt of *Adam's* particular Transgression, in eating the forbidden Fruit, imputed to us. He was the Head and common Father of Mankind, and we were legally Parties in that Covenant which was at first made with him; for God establish'd his Covenant made with *Adam*, principally with respect to his Nature, and not only with respect to his Person: so that by consequence it must follow, that all who are Partakers of that Nature, are bound by that Covenant, and are therefore liable to the Guilt which follow'd upon the Breach and Violation of it: *Rom. 5. 12. & ver. 18.*

By the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation, &c. (2.) The Want of original Righteousness: Rom. 3. 23. *All have sinned, and come short of the Glory of God; i. e. of the glorious Image of God, which was at first stamp'd upon Man.* And, (3.) A corrupt Disposition in Man's Nature, instead of original Righteousness; these being the sad Effects of Adam's Sin. Now this Depravedness of our Nature, this great Averseness to Good and Proneness to Evil, is call'd the *Old Man* and the *Body of Sin*, Rom. 6. 6. *the Sin that dwelleth in us*, Rom. 7. 17. *the Body of Death*, Rom. 7. 24. *the Flesh*, as opposite to the Spirit and Grace, Rom. 7. 18, 25. *the Law of the Members*, Rom. 7. 23. a Man's own Lusts, Jam. 1. 14. Where it is expressly distinguish'd from actual Sin, as being the procreant Cause of it.

2. He is convinc'd of innumerable actual Transgressions. (1.) Omissions of Good and the Duties requir'd of us. (2.) Commissions of Evil, high Violations of both Tables of the Law of God, and offending against his Gospel. (3.) Of offending in the Manner of doing that, which for the Matter was good; such as are slight and negligent Performances of holy Duties. (4.) The Aggravations of all these, in regard of, 1. The Heinousness and Greatness of many of them. 2. The numberless Numbers of them, if we consider wicked Thoughts, vile Affections, sinful Words, evil Actions. And, 3. That many of them have been committed, notwithstanding the many and great Mercies bestow'd on us of God, which engag'd us to a more dutiful Carriage towards him; and notwithstanding the Judgments of God threatned in his Word, which should have made us fearful to offend him; and notwithstanding likewise our many Promises and Vows of better Obedience: all which have laid us under farther and greater Obligations of Care to perform them. Now when the Spirit of God shines thus with his convincing Beams into the Soul and Conscience of a Sinner, and clearly discovers these things to him, the exceeding great Evil that is in Sin, with the Danger and mischievous Consequents of it, and the Sea of Sin that is both in his Heart and Life; he must needs cry out with the Leper, *Unclean, unclean!* and with St. Paul, *O miserable Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Death!* And this Conviction of
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the Holy Spirit is not slight and ineffectual (such as wicked and unregenerate Persons sometimes have, who are convinc'd they are Sinners in general, but yet think their Hearts good enough, and are little sensible of the great Corruption and Depravedness of their Natures) but it's deep and powerful, accompany'd with other excellent Effects of the Spirit following it. As,

2dly, Contrition. The Spirit of God first opens a Sinner's Eyes, and then breaks a Sinner's Heart. The broken and contrite Heart is his own work : but we are (with our Eyes unto him) to be labouring after it. The broken-hearted Sinner is brought to feel the Weight and Burden of his Sins, and to see with Sorrow and Remorse, that he hath been all this while wretchedly working out his own Damnation : he comes now, with the Prodigal, to himself, and with those true Penitents in *Ezek. 36. 31.* *He remembers his evil Ways and his Doings that were not good, and loaths himself in his own sight, for his Iniquities and Abominations.* The Remembrance of his Sins is now bitter to him, and the Burden of them unsupportable : from which Contrition and Humiliation for Sin, such gracious Workings as these usually follow.

1. The Sinner is exceedingly and heartily griev'd, that by his Sins he has so highly offended so gracious a God, who delights not in the Death of poor sinful Creatures, but *had rather they should repent, and turn and live.*

2. He is grieved, that by his Sins he has pierced his blessed Saviour ; his Sins being some of those Scourges wherewith he was whipped, some of those Stripes wherewith he was beaten, and some of those Torments and Pains that he endur'd.

3. That he has so often by his Sins grieved the Holy Spirit, and so ingratfully resisted his blessed and gracious Motions.

4. That he has, by his Iniquities, so exceedingly defil'd his own Soul, and wounded his Conscience.

5. He is griev'd that he has sinned against so much Love and Mercy, so much Patience and Forbearance that God hath exercis'd towards him.

6. He is likewise deeply sensible, that by his Sins he hath made himself liable to the Wrath and Curse of God, that he deserves to be separated from the Lord,
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and to be punish'd for his Sins, with Devils and damned Fiends for ever in the lowest Hell.

This godly Sorrow for Sin differs from worldly Sorrow in these respects:

(1.) That it is voluntary. A true Penitent labours to work his Heart to it; whereas worldly Sorrows are no way welcome to us. But a true Penitent is active to get his Heart humbled, prays to God for a broken Heart, and is very thankful when he finds his Heart in such a melting Frame, that he can mourn, lament, and grieve for his Sins.

(2.) A true Penitent more prizes and values those few Tears that he hath shed before God in secret for his Sins, than all the Tears and Sorrow he ever express'd by reason of Afflictions. In worldly Sorrow, a wise Man repents of his Excess therein, and unsorrows it again: but the contrite Person is so far from that, that he provokes himself to Sorrow more for them (upon those Evangelical Motions before mention'd;) he is best pleas'd when he finds his Heart melting, and is greatly griev'd when he finds it hard.

(3.) Godly Sorrow is of longer continuance: worldly Sorrow usually wears off in a short time, Men being willing to rid themselves of it, as that which in its own nature worketh Death. But godly Sorrow, that rational secret Sorrow, tho it be not so stirring and outwardly apparent as the other, yet it continues and increases, even under the greatest Assurance of Pardon, and Sense of God's Love. A true Penitent can never reflect upon his Sins (tho he hath ground to hope that God hath pardon'd them in his Son) but he must grieve, that he has behav'd himself so unworthily towards so gracious and tender a Father.

But here it will be requisite to shew, that this Doctrine of Sorrow and Contrition for Sin must be understood with some Cautions and Limitations. As,

1. An equal Degree of Sorrow for Sin, is not necessary in all. One Man's Terrors and Heart-breakings are no necessary Precedent for all others to reach.

2. An high Degree of Sorrow is not necessarily requir'd in all at their first Conversion: for God may come sooner in with Gospel-Cordials after Law-Convictions, to one than to another; and none have reason

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to question their Conversion only upon that account. For the Scripture does no where determine a certain Measure or Degree of Sorrow; the Spirit of God is herein a free Agent, and worketh as he pleaseth.

3. None should desire of God overwhelming and amazing Shakings and Humblings of Soul. God better knows our Frame, and what we are able to bear, than we do our selves.

4. None can judg of the Truth of his Repentance, merely by the Greatness of his present Trouble; especially if it spring (only or chiefly) from a Sense of Wrath and Punishment hanging over their heads. A Person under some great Awakenings of Conscience for the present, may return to his old Course again; yet where God is pleas'd so to plow and prepare the Heart by Convictions, it must be look'd upon as a hopeful sign that he intends to sow good Seed there: Let such Persons therefore earnestly pray to the Lord to carry on these good Beginnings in them, to a full and sound Conversion; not dispute or argue against themselves, but looking up to him, depend upon his Grace, that they may be farther carry'd on.

5. Sorrow for Sin is then in measure sufficient, when it effects the Work for which it properly serves, viz. when it brings the Soul out of love with Sin, takes it out of the ways of Sin, makes it so apprehensive of Danger, that the Soul hereby is persuaded to cast it self on Christ Jesus for Pardon. When these Horrors and Awakenings of Conscience work Desires not only of Ease, but of Grace; not only of the Pardon of Sin, but of Power against it; and leave the Heart in a better Disposition to Obedience for the time to come, we may then conclude the Work to be true and gracious.

3dly. *A Hating and Loathing of Sin.* A true Penitent reflecting upon the Unreasonableness and Evil of his former Ways, cannot but loath himself, and be inwardly displeas'd with himself for his own Folly and self-procur'd Misery. He accuseth and condemns himself, as having been foolish, disobedient, deceived, and guilty of Madness, to have run so long such a desperate Course, which he now sees tended apparently to his Ruin. The Spirit of Sanctification works in him a Distaste, Displeasure, and holy Indignation against all Sin. He now loaths Sin as
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Sin, (and not only as a Cause of Suffering) and he loves Holiness, as that which is a Participation of the Divine Nature. For,

1. His Judgment is alter'd, his Mind chang'd, and set against it: he sees with other Eyes than he did before; he sees now there is no Evil like Sin, and that which Sin procures. It's Sin therefore he hates, and it is upon the account of Sin he loaths himself: he is made sensible of the Evil and Danger of it; he is convinc'd that the best of Sin is but like a Cup of sweet Wine, that hath deadly Poison in it.

2. His Heart and Affections are turn'd against it. He hath a new Frame of Heart put into him, a new and holy Nature, contrary to Sin: and as a Leper loaths himself, because his Nature is contrary to his Disease; so it is (tho operating in a freer way) with a converted Soul, as to the Leprosy of Sin; he cannot but hate it, and loath it: *Ezek. 36. 31. & chap. 6. 9.* And as real Hatred is to the whole kind, so he that truly hates Sin as Sin, and as 'tis contrary to the holy Nature, Will, and Law of God, and having in it those other Malig-nities before mention'd, must needs hate every Sin on that account. As he that hates one Toad hates all, be-cause they are all of the same poisonous kind; so a con-verted penitent Sinner hates and loaths every Sin, is sick and weary of it: it is a burden to him, and his Heart rises against it; he had rather God should exercise him with any Afflictions, than give him up to a harden'd Course in Sin.

Ashly. Confession of Sin, and Supplication for Pardon. A true Penitent that is convinc'd of the Evil of Sin, and his own Guilt, and hath his Heart wrought to a real Dislike and Hatred of it, will be willing to confess all his Sins and Iniquities before the Lord. Confession of Sin is the spiritual Vomit of the Soul, whereby it casts up the (sometime sweet) Morsels of Sin with Loathing and Detestation. For tho Sin seem'd sweet in the Com-mission, yet it is bitter afterwards in the Remembrance and Confession of it; and the Sinner is willing thus to take shame to himself upon the account of it, consider-ing he hath such Encouragement hereunto from the gra-cious Promise of God, *Prov. 28. 13. He that confesseth and forsaketh his Sins shall find Mercy.* And *1 John 1. 9.*
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If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins. A penitent Confession of Sin includes Self-accusing, Self-judging, and Supplication for Pardon.

1. A penitent Sinner freely draws up a Bill of Indictment against himself, a large Accusation and Charge against his own Soul: he humbly lays open his Sins before God, and hides them not, acknowledges his Guilt, and takes shame to himself for it. So David did, *Psal.* 51. 3, 4. so Daniel did, *Dan.* 9. 4, 5. and so the Publican, *Luke* 18. 13. and the Prodigal, *Luke* 15. 18.

2. He judges himself, acknowledging the Holiness and Justness of the Law, and himself a guilty Transgressor of it; and thereupon liable to the Curse thereof, if God should proceed against him according to his Deserts. Thus the Prodigal, *I have sinned*; and concludes with, *I am not worthy*—not worthy of any Mercy, but deserving severe Punishment and Displeasure.

3. Supplication for Pardon. In the sense he hath of God's merciful Nature, he will humbly sue to him for Pardon, and cast himself at the feet of his Mercy and free Grace, depending thereon, and on the Merits of his Son, his blessed Saviour, for the obtaining of it. And in the Confession of Sin it will be useful to observe the following Rules:

(1.) We should confess all our known Sins (that we can remember) particularly; and in order hereto, let us take our selves in private, consider of our Guiltiness both of original and actual Sins, and spread them before the Lord, with a clear and free Confession of them: not that we can hereby acquaint God with any thing he knew not before, for all our Sins are before him; yea, *our secret Sins in the Light of his Countenance*, *Psal.* 90. 8. But God requires our penitent Confession, that we may be made the more sensible of our Sins, and may feel the Plague of our own Hearts, and that we may come hereby into a greater dislike of Sin, and abhorrence of it for the future. And seeing every one is guilty of many more Sins than he can recal or remember (tho he examine his Heart never so seriously) therefore when we have with sorrow and shame, and clearly without guile, acknowledg'd and confess'd all our known Sins to the Lord, of every sort and kind, with Supplication to him for pardoning Mercy and the Forgiveness of them, in
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and thro Christ; then, with *David's* general Acknowledgment, let us confess the rest, viz. our secret, unknown, and undiscover'd Sins: *Who can understand his Errors*, and how often he hath offended? *Lord, cleanse thou me from secret Sins*, Psal. 19. 12. and from all those I am any way guilty of, tho I cannot now remember them. But,

(2.) Observe, it's not formal Words or handsom Expressions that God looketh at, or empty verbal Confessions; but such as flow out of a contrite Heart, and a deep Sense and Feeling of the Evil of Sin, and due Apprehension of God's Displeasure against it, and are accompany'd with a hearty Sorrow, Shame, and Hatred of it. When the Tongue speaks out of the abundance of a contrite and broken Heart (that feels the Bitterness and Anguish of Sin) this is pleasing unto God.

(3.) In some cases Confession unto Man is also requisite, as under deep Wounds of Conscience; it's requisite then to open the true State and Case of our Souls to some godly Minister, or some faithful experienc'd Christian, that they may give their Advice and Counsel, and suit their Prayers to our particular Case. So also under any eminent Judgment, procur'd by a more than ordinary Provocation, as in the Case of *Achan*, Josh. 7. 19. that God's Justice may be clear'd, and Care in the way of his Providence. So also he that by any notorious Offence really scandalizeth his Brother, or the Church of Christ, ought to be willing by a private or publick Confession and Sorrow for Sin, to declare his Repentance to those that are offended; who are thereupon to be reconcil'd to him, and in Love to receive him.

5thly. Forsaking of Sin. A truly penitent Sinner not only confesses his Sins, but leaves and forsakes them, and whatever he apprehends displeasing unto God: the Language of his Heart is, *Lord, what I see not to be amiss in my self, do thou shew me; and wherein I have done Iniquity, enable me, by thy Grace, that I may do so no more*; Job 34. 32. The Grace of God which now rules in his Heart, engages him,

1. To leave off the practice of every known Sin, secret as well as open; our most pleasing and most profitable Sins, as well as all other Sins. True and sincere Obedience is universal, especially in the Purpose and Bent of

of the Heart. He that from Conscience of his Duty to God forsaketh one Sin, for the same reason will forbear all; the same Divine Authority awing and binding the Conscience to forsake one, as well as another. And therefore to pick and chuse, here to obey God's Law, and there to dispense with our selves in the breaking of it, is a shreud sign and token of Hypocrisy.

2. To serious Resolutions against Sin for the future: Ephraim shall say, *What have I to do any more with Idols?* Hos. 14. 8. So Job 34. 31. *Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne Chastisement, I will not offend any more.* And these Resolutions are not rash, sudden, and unadvis'd; but they arise from solid Reasons and Convictions (such as have been before mention'd) from a sense of the Odiousness, Evil, and Danger of Sin. They are also accompany'd with earnest and fervent Prayer for Help against it; and they are made, not in any confidence of our own Strength, but in the Strength of Christ, whose Grace the returning Sinner humbly implores and depends on, to enable him to escape the Snares of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to strengthen him against the known and willing Commission of any Sin. Which leads to the sixth and last part of Repentance, which is,

6thly. Conversion and Turning unto God. In every truly penitent Sinner there is a most remarkable Change wrought, viz. a Change of Mind, of Heart, and Life. His Mind is chang'd by a gracious Work of Conviction, his Heart by a Work of Humiliation, godly Sorrow, and Hatred of Sin; and his Life is chang'd: therefore forsaking Sin, he follows after Righteousness, and turning from Satan, he turns to the Lord. Now the Bent of his Heart is turn'd to God, chusing him for his Delight and Portion, and his Desire is to walk before him in sincere Obedience; Isa. 55. 7. *Let the Wicked forsake his Way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts, and let him turn unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* All Sin is an Aversion from God; and the proper Cure of it is by Conversion unto God. Remorse for Guilt, and a Return from Sin unto God, and a holy walking with him, is that which the Spirit of God works in all those that are truly converted. As we must cease to do evil, so we must

must learn to do well; as we must put off the *old Man* with his Deeds, so we must put on the *new Man*. Negative Holiness, and leaving off our former sinful ways, is not enough; to cease from bringing forth evil Fruit and wild Grapes; but we must be fruitful in every good Work, Col. 1. 10. and follow after Righteousness, Godliness, Faith, Love, Patience, Meekness, &c. 1 Tim. 6. 11. As we must cease from Sin, whereby we are doing the Work of the Devil, John 8. 44. so we must abound in the Work of the Lord, 1 Cor. 15. 58. If we would approve our selves truly penitent, this is the Formality of true Gospel-Repentance; *A turning from Sin unto God, by new Obedience.* And it expresseth it self,

1. In Acts of Piety and Religion towards God. A converted and truly penitent Soul is pursuing after Communion with God and Conformity to him. He now delights in God and Holiness, and in himself so far forth as he finds Holiness wrought in his Heart. His unfeigned Desire now is, to worship God sincerely, and according to his Will, and to live unto him, and glorify him both in his Heart and Life.

2. In Acts of Righteousness and Justice towards Men. He desires to walk uprightly, to do that which is right and just, in all his Dealings and Transactions with Men; and that out of Obedience to God. If he remembers he hath wrong'd any Person formerly, either in Goods, Estate, or any other way; either by defrauding or unjust detaining what is due to them in any respect; he will endeavour to make *Restitution*, with *Zacheus*, Luke 19. 8. or to make any other suitable satisfaction, according to the nature of the Injury he hath done. He considers what God hath declar'd, Prov. 28. 13. *He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsakes them, shall have mercy.* He that restores not ill-gotten Goods, doth not repent of his Sin, and turn from it, or undo and revoke it, but still lives in it: so likewise of all other Sin according to the kind and nature of it; *Restitution* (in case of Injury and Wrong done) being an inseparable Fruit of true Repentance. In case likewise of any Difference arising with any Person, a penitent Sinner (whose Heart by Grace is turn'd unto God) is very willing to be reconcil'd, ready to forgive whatsoever Injuries have been done unto him, and desiring

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Forgiveness of those that have been any ways injur'd by him. And true Repentance expresses it self,

3. In Acts of Sobriety, Temperance, and Watchfulness over our selves. *Tit. 2. 11, 12.* These and such as these are the *Fruits meet for Repentance*, and which will evidence a state of Grace, and that our Conversion is real and sincere.

Thus much of the several Parts of initial Gospel-Repentance.

Secondly, There is a progressive, continu'd, and renew'd Repentance afterward; which is a going forward in the first Repentance throughout the whole Course of our Lives: for Repentance is not only a turning, but it is also a returning to God; we must never give over till we be return'd to that Estate of perfect Holiness wherein once we were, which is not done till our dying day. *Isa. 21. 12. If ye will enquire, enquire, return, and come.* After turning our faces to God at our first Conversion, there must be a daily coming forward to him by this continu'd Repentance. The Popish Penance is confin'd within the Circle of a few Days, Weeks, Months, or Years, according to the Priest's Discretion. But the true Repentance of a Christian is a continual Act, and a daily Exercise: for the Change of the Heart is not wrought in us perfectly at the first, but there must be proceeding on by degrees; the old Man, that Body of Sin that is in us, must be crucify'd by Repentance; now crucifying is a lingering Death. After we are converted, still we carry the Body of Sin about us, and many Infirmities cleave to us, and break from us continually. As therefore in a leaking Ship there must be continual pumping, so in our Lives continual repenting, and repairing of our daily Breaches: there is matter enough in us to hold our Repentance-work all our Lives. Many practise this Duty by fits and starts, but it must be a continual Practice: For,

- (1.) We have, as was said before, daily Infirmities.
- (2.) We had Sin before our Birth, even in our Conception, that original Sin which will hang upon us till our Death.
- (3.) In regard of the Influence our Sins may have had upon others, which will continue after our Death.

(4.) Many

(4.) Many were our Sins before our Calling and Conversion, never to be forgotten, but often with Bitterness to be remember'd, as the Apostle *Paul* did his Persecution.

(5.) By neglecting the daily Exercise of Repentance, we shall make the Practice of it more difficult afterwards. The House that is daily swept hath but little dust, and is easily kept clean; but if it be seldom swept, it requires much scraping, rubbing, and washing. So in casting of Accounts, he that casts them up every day, shall the more easily cast them up at the Week's, Month's, or Year's end; but he that lets them run on from Day to Day, and from Week to Week, will find at last more trouble, and difficulty, and perplexity therein.

The Practice of this continu'd or renew'd Repentance, is,

1. By a hearty Confession and Bewailing of our Sins to the Lord.

2. A careful renew'd Watchfulness over our Hearts, against all Sin for the future.

3. Strict Examination of our selves at the Day's end, and so censuring and judging our selves for that we find amiss; with earnest Supplication to the Lord for pardoning Mercy, and a greater Measure of Grace and Strength against every Sin, thro Christ.

There are some special Times also and Occasions for a more solemn, narrow, and strict Search and Examination of our selves, and Inquiry into the State of our Souls; as when we are call'd out unto any special Service to God, or when we seek for any special Blessing from him; so also when we are under any special Afflictions: also in and after any special Falls and Sins, whether any gross or more secret Sin; such as greater Deadness, Coldness, Security, &c. But of these I inlarge not here, purposing to speak of them afterward under another Head, viz. of Fasting and Humiliation: only I shall lay down here some Rules and Directions concerning this Duty, and some further Motives perswading to the serious, faithful, and conscientious Practice of it.

Rule 1. Repentance (tho ever so serious) is not to be rested in, as any Satisfaction for Sin, or any Cause of the Pardon thereof, (that being only the Act of God's free Grace in and thro Christ;) yet it is of such necessity

cessity to Sinners, that none may expect Pardon without it. 'Tis necessary for these Reasons: (1.) Because God hath commanded it, and the Gospel enjoins it, without which, and in the neglect of it, we cannot hope to partake of any other Privileges and Blessings of it, and of the Covenant of Grace. (2.) That we may taste something of the Bitterness of Sin, that so we may the more carefully avoid it for the time to come. (3.) It's necessary to prepare and fit us to receive Pardon of Sin, to dispose us into such a Frame as is futable to such a Blessing. (4.) To make us set a higher value on God's pardoning Mercy, and Christ's Merits and Blood. How dear and precious is Christ to all such Souls as are truly humbled for Sin?

Rule 2. As there is no Sin so small but it deserves Damnation, so there is no Sin so great that it can bring Damnation upon those that truly repent. It's not the falling into the Water that drowns any one, but the continuing in it, and not getting out again: so it is with Sin; it's not the falling into Sin that is the final Ruin of any, but the continuing in it, and not recovering our selves out of it again, by Repentance, and Recourse to the Blood of Christ.

Rule 3. Labour that your Sorrow for Sin may bear some proportion to the Greatness of your Sins. As Sin is the greatest Evil, so our Sorrow for it should be the greatest Sorrow. Betake your selves to a more solemn mourning and rending of Heart for the great Sins of your Life, refusing to be comforted with any worldly Comfort only, till you have obtain'd a Pardon. But remember that godly Sorrow is not always to be measur'd by plenty of Tears, and vehemency of Expressions, but by the weight of it upon the Heart, and by the deep displeasure of the Soul against Sin. There may be a deep rational Sorrow, a great and intense Displeasure and Vexation in the Heart for Sin, where there is no such outward passionate Expression of it.

Rule 4. Content not your self with a general Repentance, but endeavour to repent of your particular Sins particularly. Many Sins long ago committed may still lie at the door, if not repented of, and pardon'd thro the Blood of Christ. Review therefore your Life past, suffer your Conscience to speak freely, and to set your Sins in order before you. Labour to be heartily humbled

both for the Vileness and Depravedness of your Nature, and for all the particular actual Sins, Failings, and Miscalriages, which you find you have been any way guilty of. Repent of all Sin that lies upon your Conscience, and take not up with a partial Reformation.

Rule 5. Set upon the speedy Practice of this great and necessary Duty of Repentance, in all the parts of it; do this as it is your Duty, even while you fear you want the Grace of Repentance: which Course is recommended by an eminent * Servant of * Dr. Anstey. Christ, "with respect to every Duty and Grace, to believe as it is a Duty, while you think you cannot act Faith as a Grace: so to set our selves to the Exercise of those Graces, of every Grace, which at present we feel not, but fear we want them. Let God find us in a way of Duty, and we shall find him in a way of Grace."

Rule 6. When you have (thro the Assistance of Grace) humbled your Soul, and repented seriously of all your Sins, do not rest in your Repentance (as was before hinted) but go out of your self to Christ for Pardon. Rest not on this side Christ; not your Tears, but his Blood only can cleanse your Conscience from all Guilt. But of this more under the following Head of Saving Faith.

I shall only add the following Motives, to persuade to the faithful and conscientious Practice of this great Duty.

1. Consider how highly pleasing it is to God himself, that a Sinner should repent and return to him; *Ezek.* 33. 11.

2. That it is one of those important Duties which our blessed Lord and Saviour chose himself first to preach and press, upon his entering on his publick Ministry; *Mat.* 4. 17. It was that which the twelve Apostles, whom he sent out to gather in Disciples to himself, begun their Ministry with, *Mark* 6. 12. and which he warn'd them to continue to do, when he left the World, *Luke* 24. 47.

3. That it is that which the Angels in Heaven are said to rejoice at, *Luke* 15. 10. whilst Satan and his Instruments rejoice and sport themselves, when a Sinner is going still on in his Sins, and treasuring up to himself Wrath against the Day of Wrath.

4. Consider it is a Gospel-Duty and a Gospel-Privilege, the Law allowing no place for it. It is of free Grace that God will vouchsafe to pardon a Sinner upon his Repentance, thro Faith in the Blood of his Son.

5. Consider that a necessity is laid upon us, and we be to us if we do not repent. It is not consistent, (1.) With the Justice of God, to pardon a wilfully impenitent Sinner. Tho Repentance do not satisfy his Justice, yet Sin unrepented of and continu'd in, cannot be pardon'd without Injustice. Nor, (2.) With his Mercy. Tho God is infinitely merciful and ready to forgive, yet it is to penitent humbled Sinners, and not to obdurate and wilfully impenitent Transgressors: *Psal. 59. 5.* Nor, (3.) With the Undertaking of Christ, who came to call Sinners to Repentance, and to seek and save those that were lost in their own eyes: he was *exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of Sins, Acts 5. 31.* He came to save us from our Sins, and not in any of them, *Mat. 1. 21.* but by his Grace to turn our Hearts from Sin to God. *Acts 26. 18.* To open their eyes, and to turn them from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God; that they may receive Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among them that are sanctify'd by Faith in himself.

C H A P. III.

Of Saving Faith.

THE Necessity and Excellency of this Grace of Faith being already spoken to in the former Part, *Chap. 18.* and also in *Part 3.* I shall enlarge the less upon it here, with respect to the great Excellency and Usefulness of it. It is the Grace which alone unites the Soul to Christ as our Head and Saviour, that interests us in his Merits, and intails thereby upon Believers all those other Graces and Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, by which only it is they can be in a Capacity of pleasing and glorifying God, of serving him faithfully here, and of being made perfectly happy in the Enjoyment of him in Heaven for ever

ever hereafter; and is therefore one of the main and principal Doctrines which our blessed Saviour, and afterward the Apostle *Paul*, in the Course of his Ministry insisted on; *Acts* 20. 20, 21. and accordingly he calls it *precious Faith*, *2 Pet.* 1. 1.

There are several kinds of Faith mention'd in the Scripture, *viz.*

1. An historical Faith; which is a Knowledg and Belief of the Scriptures, upon the Revelation and Testimony of God himself: *Jam.* 2. 19. This Faith one may have, that neither loves God nor fears him.

2. A Faith of Miracles, bestow'd on many in the first planting of the Gospel, *1 Cor.* 13. 2. *Mat.* 17. 20. and was given by the Spirit of God rather for the good of others, than of the Persons themselves that had it.

3. A temporary Faith, *viz.* an Assent to the Doctrine of the Gospel, with the external Profession thereof, and some kind of Joy in the Knowledg of it for a time; which usually fades away and is renounc'd, when Tryals and Sufferings attend the Profession of it: *Luke* 8. 13. *John* 5. 35. But that which is here to be treated of, is,

4. A justifying saving Faith, of which the Apostle speaks, *Rom.* 3. 28. & *Eph.* 2. 8. *1 Pet.* 1. 9. By which, special Grace and Conversion is frequently call'd, especially in the New Testament; *John* 1. 12. & 3. 36. & 6. 29. *Acts* 16. 31. which is the Root and Spring of all other Graces in the Soul, and that which gives a being to them.

The Spirit of God sets out this Grace of Faith, or believing in Christ, by various Phrases and Expressions in the Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament, to convey the Knowledg of it the better to our Understandings. As,

1. By *looking unto Christ* for Help, *John* 3. 14. As the stung *Israelite* was cured by looking up to the brazen Serpent, so is the guilty Soul by *looking up* to Christ by the Eye of Faith, and believing in him; *Isa.* 45. 22.

2. By *coming unto him*. He is the only Physician of Souls, to whom we must go for Help: *John* 5. 40. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* And *John* 6. 37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.* It is not a local, but spiritual coming to Christ. He that

truly comes to Christ, comes out of himself, and from the Power and Filth of Sin, to put himself under the Government and Obedience of the Lord Jesus; and he comes to him as a Saviour both from the Guilt and Power of Sin; to be wash'd and made white in his Blood, for Pardon and Justification through him; and to be purify'd by the sanctifying Operation of his Holy Spirit.

3. It's call'd *flying for Refuge to lay hold on the Hope that is set before us* in the Gospel: In allusion to the City of Refuge under the Law, which was appointed for the Man-slayer to flee to, from the Avenger of Blood. When the Spirit of God convinces of Sin, and makes the Sinner see the Curse of the Law pursuing him upon the account of his Sins, and the danger he is in thereby, making him cry out for a City of Refuge; he then shews the poor Sinner (whom he is about to convert) that all other things are but Refuges of Lyes, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only City of Refuge and Safety for him to flee unto; he is the strong City, the Salvation that is in him will be as Walls and Bulwarks about a poor guilty Sinner that gets into him. Till Sinners are sensible of their Sin, and see their Danger, and the miserable Condition they are in thereby, and a Deluge of Wrath ready to overtake them; they see no need of an Ark for the saving of their Souls, they apprehend no need of Christ to be a Saviour to them: but to every true Believer he is precious, they make him their strong City, their Hiding-place, their Tower of Defence, and City of Refuge.

4. Believing, in Scripture, is set forth by receiving Christ: *John 1. 12. To as many as receiv'd him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe in his Name.* He is receiv'd into and dwells in the Believer's Heart by Faith, *Eph. 3. 17. embracing him in all his Offices which he hath graciously undertaken, and in all those Relations in which he stands to Believers.* He is truly willing to receive Christ as his Lord and Saviour, to free and deliver the poor Sinner both from the Guilt and Power, and all Defilement and Abode of Sin, to bring him to God, and make him happy in the Fruition and Enjoyment of him for ever. So he is offer'd, and so he is to be receiv'd by us.

5. It's call'd a *trusting in Christ*, or a hoping in him; *Eph. 1. 12, 13. Psal. 22. 8.* When a poor Sinner is convinc'd of his miserable Estate by Sin, if the Lord have a gracious purpose to bring him home to himself, he will take him off from trusting in any thing in himself to justify him in God's sight, and reveals the Lord Jesus Christ to him, as the only Redeemer, and mighty to save; and so enables the poor Sinner to trust in him, and lay the whole weight and stress of his Soul upon him.

6. Believing, in Scripture, is express'd by Acts of *Resting* and *Relying* on God; and so it will help us to understand what believing in Christ imports: *2 Chron. 16. 7. Because thou hast rely'd on the King of Assyria, and not on the Lord thy God. Isa. 10. 20. 2 Chron. 14. 11.* From these Scriptures which shew what it is to believe in God, we may thence gather (as to the Act) what it is to believe in Christ. And so Resting, Relying, and Recumbency of the Soul on Christ, is believing in him.

7. Believing is set forth by eating of the Flesh of Christ and drinking his Blood; *John 6. 47. Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life in you. And ver. 56. He that eateth my Flesh, and drinketh my Blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.* Our Saviour speaks not here of the outward eating, which is done in the Lord's Supper (for that was not yet instituted;) but of the spiritual eating, that is, receiving of Christ and believing in him, by a true Faith, and being thereby united to him, and strengthen'd and refresh'd by his Spirit and Grace, as the Body is by good and wholesom Food. From all which Scriptures we may the better understand the Nature of justifying or saving Faith; and that it may be thus describ'd, *viz.*

That it is a Grace wrought in the Soul by the Spirit of God, whereby an awaken'd Sinner being convinc'd of his Sin and Misery in himself, is made truly willing to receive and rest upon the Lord Jesus Christ alone for Salvation, as he is offer'd in the Gospel. To it these six things are requir'd:

1. A real Belief of the Truth of the Gospel, a true historical Faith concerning Christ's Person, Undertaking, and Performance; what he is, and what he hath done: *Heb. 11. 6. He that comes to God, must believe that he is.*

And so he that comes to Christ, must believe that he is the Saviour of Mankind, and came into the World for this end, to be a Mediator and Peace-maker between God and Man. *I know whom I have believ'd*, says the Apostle, *2 Tim. 1. 12.*

2. A deep Sense and Feeling of the heavy Burden of Sin, of the Evil and Danger, of the Guilt and Defilement of it. The Soul is brought to see its own undone Condition, and to be truly sick of its Sins, before it will come to Christ, as to a *Physician*; *Mat. 9. 12.*

3. A firm Persuasion and Belief that there is no other way of Salvation but by Christ alone: *Acts 4. 12. Neither is there Salvation in any other, for there is none other Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we must be saved.*

4. A clear Knowledg that Christ is not only able to save, but willing and ready to save all such as will receive him, and embrace him as the true Messias and their only Saviour, and unfeignedly give up themselves to him; *John 6. 37.*

5. A sincere Desire and real Thirsting after an Interest in this Saviour.

6. An actual and advis'd giving up the Soul to Christ for the obtaining the Pardon of all his Sins, and firmly trusting in him to be justify'd and sanctify'd, and everlastingly saved by him.

Which Acts of Faith may be reduc'd to these three Heads, *viz.* Assent, Consent, and Affiance.

1. Assent; by which we believe God's Word in general: *Acts 24. 14. Believing all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets.* There is the first Work of Faith; to assent to the Scriptures, and all things contain'd therein. The general Faith goes before the particular, as the Foundation before the Building.

2. Consent. Faith doth in a special manner receive Christ, that is saving Faith. The Soul being convinc'd of its need of him, the Believer is made truly willing to receive and embrace him in all his Offices of *Prophet, Priest, and King*; for so he is tender'd to us in the Gospel, *John 1. 12. Col. 2. 6.* Now when I accept and take him as God offers him, and to that end for which he offers him, that he may do that for me, and be that to me, that God hath appointed him to do, and be, in the Gospel; then I receive Christ.

3. Affiance.

3. Affiance. Faith rests upon Christ; besides Choice, there must be a Recumbency: Isa. 26. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose Mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee*: that is a special Work of Faith. Now what is it that we rest upon Christ for? For all Grace here, all kind of Grace, Justification, Sanctification; John 1. 16. *Acts* 5. 31. for Privileges, Qualifications, Strength to perform all our Duties, for all Covenant-Blessings both here and hereafter; all these are the Purchase of his Blood for all that are his real Members. Christ is all *all in all* to us, for *Grace* here and *Glory* hereafter, Col. 3. 11. we are said to believe on him to Life everlasting, 1 Tim. 1. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 9. Those that flee to Christ by Faith, do eye this in all their spiritual Conflicts, by which all the Temptations of Sense are defeated. And here it will not be amiss to mention the Distinction that some Divines speak of, viz.

1. Of the Faith of Adherence. And,

2. Of the Faith of Assurance.

1. When a poor penitent Sinner doth cast himself wholly on Christ crucify'd for Pardon and Life (upon the Promise of the Gospel) and tho he has no assurance in himself, how the Lord will dispose of him, yet he is resolv'd still to trust in him for the obtaining all Covenant-Blessings, as Justification, Sanctification, &c. Grace to persevere, and at last to obtain eternal Life: this is commonly call'd Faith of Adherence or Recumbency.

But when a Person that hath thus cast himself on Christ, reflects upon what he hath done, and comparing it with the Gospel-Promises, becomes (by the assistance of the holy and sanctifying Spirit, bearing witness with his Spirit) firmly persuaded of his Interest in Christ, and that he shall be saved by him: this is call'd Faith of Assurance.

Now the former of these is that Faith which is requir'd in the Covenant of Grace, by which a Sinner is freely acquitted of all his Sins, and accounted as righteous in the sight of God. This is the Faith that truly unites the Soul to Christ; and being by Faith thus join'd to the Lord, (as the Apostle speaks, 1 Cor. 6. 17.) he is one Spirit with him; that is, is govern'd by one and the self-same Spirit. The Scripture sets forth this admirable spiritual Union, by these four earthly Resemblances.

†

By

By the Union,

1. Of the Husband and Wife. Christ and Believers stand in this conjugal Relation each to other; they are espous'd to Christ, marry'd to Christ; Eph. 5. 23. *The Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church; and he is the Saviour of the Body.*

2. Of the Head and Members; Eph. 1. 22, 23. *He hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be Head over all things to the Church, which is his Body.*

3. Of the Stones in the Building, with the Foundation whereon they rest; 1 Cor. 3. 11. *Other Foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Eph. 2. 22. *In whom ye are also builded together for an Habitation of God thro the Spirit.*

4. Of the Vine and the Branches; John 15. 5. *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches.*

So that when we do willingly betroth our selves to Christ, and consent to take him for our Lord and Husband, and to be his loyal Spouse; when we are willing to be in subjection to him, and to be rul'd by him, as the Members of the Body are by the Head; when we depend, and rest, and rely on him alone, for our whole Salvation, as the Stones rest on the Foundation: lastly, when we derive Grace and Holiness from him, as the Branches derive Virtue and Sap from the Root and Stock, and do bring forth Fruit in him and to him; then there is a real and spiritual Union wrought between Christ and the Soul.

I come next to consider the Properties of saving Faith.

1. 'Tis usher'd in by Conviction, and a Sensibleness of the Evil and Danger of Sin, and accompany'd with some Remorse for it; tho that Conviction and Humiliation is afterward more increas'd, upon the sense of God's pardoning Mercy in Christ. The Whole neither need nor will look after a Physician: till the Soul be sick of Sin, it will not apply it self to Christ for Cure.

2. It receiveth Christ in all his Offices, of Priest, Prophet, and King. (1.) As a Priest that offer'd up himself a Sacrifice to God, and was a Propitiation for Sin; that died to satisfy God's Justice and make Atonement, and now lives to make Intercession for all poor Sinners, that come unto him, and rest on his Merits and Intercession, for Pardon and Peace. (2.) As the great Prophet

phet of God, who is by his Spirit and Word the Teacher and Guide of his Church. (3.) As a King, accepting him to rule in his Heart, consenting to his Laws and Government, and expecting Help and Succour from him against all spiritual Enemies.

3. It puts the Person believing into a new state, viz. a state of Justification. A Man is then condemn'd, when the Law condemns him; and he is then justify'd, when the Gospel justifies him. He that believeth not, is condemn'd already; *John 3. 18.* that is, by the Sentence of the Law. He that believeth not, the Wrath of God abideth on him, *John 3. 36.* that is, the Wrath of God, by the Sentence of the Law, is upon every Sinner; yet not so necessarily, but by a true Repentance, and Faith in Christ (which is productive of Gospel-Obedience) he may escape it. For the Gospel assures us, that *he that believeth, is passed from Death unto Life, John 5. 24.* and *he that believes shall be saved.* This is call'd sometimes the *Law of Faith, Rom. 3. 27.* sometimes the *Law of Righteousness, Rom. 9. 31.* So that Faith makes a very great Change in our Condition, translating us from a State of Death unto a State of spiritual Life.

4. It produceth an high Prizing and fervent Love to Christ. Every true Believer may say with *Peter, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee, John 21. 17.* There is no Soul espous'd by Faith to Christ, but hath a true and sincere Love unto him; *Unto you that believe, he is precious; 1 Pet. 2. 7.*

5. Saving Faith is a heart-purifying Faith: a common Faith may elevate a Man to some singular Apprehensions and Expressions, and to some outward Conformities, in things either not difficult, or not dangerous; but this special justifying Faith purifies and changes the Heart, and reforms the Life. It not only produceth a Change in our Condition and State, which is a moral Change; but in our Persons and Natures, which is a real Change. 'Tis not only a justifying, but a sanctifying Grace also; *Acts 15. 9. Purifying their Hearts by Faith. Acts 26. 18. —to an Inheritance among them that are sanctify'd by Faith that is in me.* It's not only an intitling Grace, which doth interest us in Christ and his Benefits, but it is also a conforming Grace; *If any Man be in Christ* (and it is Faith which unites the Soul to Christ, and implants

implants us into him) *he is a new Creature*, 2 Cor. 5. 17. As the first *Adam* convey'd Guilt and Corruption to his Posterity, so the second *Adam* conveys Pardon and Holiness to all his real Members; and therefore is call'd a *quickening Spirit*, 1 Cor. 15. 45. If any please themselves with a graceless Faith, with a Faith not accompany'd with Holiness, they miserably deceive their own Souls: Let none abuse themselves with a Conceit of Faith and Justification, if they have found in themselves no Change of Heart by Sanctification; 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.

6. Justifying Faith is not idle and barren, but working and fruitful. Tho Love and Good Works are not the Form of it (as the Papists pretend) yet it hath always Love and Good Works attending it, and flowing from it: Eph. 1. 15. *After I heard of your Faith in the Lord Jesus, and Love to all the Saints—* Jam. 2. 17, 18. *Even so Faith, if it have not Works, is dead, being alone, &c.* That which justifies our Persons, is Faith in Jesus Christ; that which justifies our Faith before Men, and proves it not to be dead, but a living Faith, is the acting and producing of Good Works.

The Motives which should persuade us to labour for this excellent Grace, are such as these following:

1. Consider, Christ is fully able to save; he is an all-sufficient Saviour, *able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. He is fitly qualify'd for this great Undertaking, being God and Man, and his Works and Offices are suited and fitted to our Necessities. He is able to take away all our Guilt by his Merit; to subdue all our Corruptions by his Grace and Holy Spirit; to conquer Satan for us, and *to abolish Death*, and take away the Sting of it, Heb. 2. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 10. and by his Power to raise our Bodies from the Grave at the last Day, to be for ever with himself. Let us therefore encourage our Souls to believe on him: there is more Merit in Christ, who is the Son of God, to procure our Pardon, and reconcile us to God, than there is Guilt in us to merit Condemnation: for the Person suffering being in his Godhead infinite, and the Merit and Value of his Sufferings depending on the Dignity and Worth of his Person, the Satisfaction made by him must needs be of an infinite value and abundantly sufficient. So that the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ do make

a full Satisfaction to the Justice of God for the dishonour done unto him by our Sins; and this should wonderfully encourage us to come to him by Faith, and to rely on him, on the All-sufficiency of his Merits and Intercession, for our Peace with God, and for the conferring on us all those Blessings of the Covenant which he has purchas'd for Believers.

2. Consider Christ was sent into the World on purpose to save Sinners; *Gal. 4. 4. & John 3. 16. God so loved the World that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life.* And *John 6. 27. Him hath God the Father sealed, i. e. authoriz'd, commission'd to this Office, and sent to execute it into a sinful World; Luke 4. 18.* Hence,

3. Consider, Christ is very willing to save; as may farther appear by his gracious Invitations to poor distressed Sinners: *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you Rest; Mat. 11. 28.* And from the Assurance he gives of Acceptance, *John 6. 37. Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.* There was never any that came to him, and was willing to close with him upon Gospel-Terms, but sped well. Nay, farther, he sends his Embassadors on this Errand, to negotiate with Sinners, and to persuade them to come to him; see *2 Cor. 5. 19, 20, 21.* and complains of them that refuse to come to him, that they might have Life in and thro him; *John 5. 40.*

4. Let us consider our extreme Need of him, and the absolute and indispensable Necessity of coming to him. If we keep off from him, the Wrath of God abides upon us; our Ruin is certain and unavoidable, being in a state of Unregeneracy. He is the brazen Serpent that only can heal us, and without looking to him we perish. His Blood is the Balm of *Gilead*, that only can cure the mortal Wound that Sin has made: if we neglect this, *there remaineth no other Sacrifice for Sin, Heb. 10. 26.* When the Lepers in *2 Kings 7. 4.* saw they must perish by Famine, or venture themselves on the Mercy of their Enemies, they resolve to go out into the *Syrians* Camp. When the Prodigal saw he must famish abroad, he resolves to go back to his Father's House; *Luke 15. 17.* Let a poor Sinner thus throw himself down at the feet of Christ, humbly casting himself on him for Peace and

and Life, resolving if he perish, he will perish there.

5. Consider, it's God's express Command that we should *believe*, 1 John 3. 23. It's therefore not only our Interest, but our indispensable Duty, under the Sense of Sin to go to Christ, or else we chuse our own Destruction. It's the Duty of a sick Man to apply himself to a Physician for Help, if he would not destroy himself by a wilful Neglect of the Physick that would cure him; so neither must the guilty sin-sick Soul destroy it self, by refusing to go to Christ the only Physician, who is so able and willing to cure all that *will come unto him*. Our Unbelief is hereby extremely aggravated, for by this Refusal we slight the greatest Love that ever God express'd, and refuse the greatest Gift that he ever gave, or could have given to the Children of Men; 1 John 4. 10. By this we undervalue the Blood of Christ, which it cost him to redeem us; we resist the gracious Motions of his Spirit, who persuades us to *come to him, that we may have Life*, John 5. 4. Acts 7. 51. We slight the Embassadors of Christ, who in his name woo and beseech us to come to him, 2 Cor. 5. 20. How great therefore must that Guilt needs be, if we still keep off from Christ; and *how shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* Heb. 2. 3. What shall we have to answer for our selves at God's Tribunal, when God shall demand the Reason of it? that we prefer'd our Sins and sensual Pleasures, that would destroy us, before a Saviour that was so graciously offer'd to us; that we pursu'd the World so hard, and set our Hearts so much upon it, that we had no time or leisure to mind our Souls; that we prefer'd Earth before Heaven; our Sins, our Profits, our Pleasures, before that Grace, Mercy, and Love, that Christ would have bestow'd upon us?

6. Consider we cannot possibly in any one respect be Losers by it: Suppose it cost us many Tears, and Prayers, and Strugglings, and doing violence to our corrupt and sensual Inclinations, and tearing our selves off from our beloved Sins; suppose on this account our carnal Friends should frown upon us and cast us off, and tho we part with all our sinful Pleasures and Delights: it's none of these, nor all together, and ten thousand times over, can give us what we are assur'd Christ will give; he will be much better to us here, than all those things we leave for

for him, even *an hundred fold better in this Life*, and a thousand fold better in the Life to come; *Mark 10. 30.*

7. Lastly, we may be assur'd that by accepting Christ by Faith, as he is offer'd in the Gospel, we shall not only bring Comfort and Salvation to our own Souls, but also (in an eminent manner) bring Glory to God. When thou (tho discourag'd in thy self by reason of thy Sins) dost yet resolve to make thy way thro all Doubts, Scruples, and Misgivings of Heart, and dost actually cast thy self on the free Grace and Mercy of God in Christ (thro his infinite Merits) for Pardon, Sanctification, and all those Covenant-Blessings which he has purchas'd for Sinners; trusting and depending on those great and precious Promises which are made over in him to Believers; and thereby settest thy Seal to his Truth, Goodness, and Faithfulness: thou dost by such an Act of Faith give Glory and Honour to God, as *Abraham* did; of whom it is said, that he stagger'd not at the Promise of God, but was strong in Faith, giving glory to God. Thereby we shall be assuredly interest'd in his special Love and Favour; and being united to Christ, and made Members of his mystical Body, we shall be interest'd in, and made Partakers thro him, of all the Blessings of the Covenant of Grace, which are abundantly sufficient to make us happy both in Time and to Eternity. Now, as the Means whereby God usually works this excellent Grace in the Hearts of the Children of Men,

(1.) Beg earnestly of God to give you his Holy Spirit, to work this saving Grace of Faith in you; *Eph. 2. 8. By Grace ye are saved, thro Faith; and that not of your selves, it is the Gift of God.* The Spirit does not only in a preparative way convince and humble for Sin, but he doth also in an effectual way draw the Soul unto Christ; *John 6. 44.* Beg of God therefore his Holy Spirit, which he hath promis'd to give to them that ask him; *Luke 11. 13.* God draweth a Sinner to his Son by the powerful and efficacious working of his Spirit upon his Mind and Heart, convincing him of Sin, the Evil and Danger of it, and making him willing to come to Christ, and to close with him on Gospel-Terms.

(2.) Conscientiously attend upon the preaching of the Word, which is the ordinary Means whereby God works this

this Grace of Faith : Rom. 10. 17. *Faith cometh by hearing.* The preaching of the Word, and also the reading of it, discovers unto lost Sinners their Misery, their Inability to help themselves, and that their only Remedy is in Christ ; it presents such Motives as may be proper to persuade and draw the Heart to Christ : and the Spirit of God setting in with the Exhortation of the Word, and powerfully, yet freely moving, persuading, and exciting the Heart to close with Christ, it thereby becomes willing, which before was unwilling, and (thro the gracious and powerful Influence of the Holy Spirit) doth actually espouse it self to Christ by Faith, accepts of him as its Lord and Saviour, and rests upon him for its whole Salvation ; for the Accomplishment of all those great and gracious Promises of the Covenant of Grace, which are made over (in him) to Believers ; and consents sincerely to all the Demands of the Covenant : and then is Salvation come to his Soul.

(3.) Study your natural Condition thorowly ; meditate often and seriously of your great Guiltiness by reason of your original and all your actual Sins, and of your utter Inability to deliver your self out of this miserable State.

(4.) Study the Gospel well, and the Covenant of Grace ; those great and most desirable Blessings and Benefits which are contain'd in it, which Christ hath purchas'd, and which in and with himself are tender'd and made over freely to Believers, and is the only Refuge for poor distressed Sinners.

(5.) Study well wherein the Nature of saving Faith consists. True Faith is an Act of the Heart, as well as of the Head, Rom. 10. 10. Many mistake Faith exceedingly, thinking it consists in a full Assurance, and in a sensible Taste of God's Love in Christ, and in a sensible and clear Persuasion that all their Sins are pardon'd ; which because they do not feel, nor experience in their own Hearts, therefore they much perplex themselves, fearing they have no Faith at all. But consider, if we are heartily willing to accept of Christ, for all those saving Purposes for which he came into the World, and is tender'd to us in the Gospel ; as our Lord to rule in and over us, as our Redeemer to save us ; and do repose our Souls upon him accordingly for Salvation, desiring
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to cleave unto him in all Estates, so that there is no Name in Heaven or Earth upon which we would put confidence for our Righteousness, Sanctification, and Discharge from all our Guilt, but only in him; and upon him our Souls desire intirely and unfeignedly to rest, for all those great and saving Benefits and Blessings of the Covenant, which God hath promis'd in him to all that believe: we have then true Faith, the Faith of Adherence, tho we have not the reflective Act of it, which is the Faith of Evidence and Assurance. The vital Act of Faith is not reflective, but direct. It is not this, *I believe Christ is mine*; but this, *I receive and embrace Christ for mine, and am willing to be his*. The State of adhering to Christ, is sure; tho the reflective Persuasion, that Christ is mine, (which yet is not the essential or proper Act of Faith, but that which follows upon it) is more comfortable, and therefore also to be labour'd for.

I shall next endeavour to remove those Impediments and Scruples that keep off many from believing.

Obj. 1. The sensible Sinner is apt to say, My Sins have been so many and so great, that I am afraid to come to Christ.

Ans. If thy Sins be great, thou hast the more need to come to Christ. If thou hast a worse Disease, and more dangerous than another, thou hast the more need to hasten to the Physician that can cure thee. Christ is able to pardon the greatest Sins, as well as the least, to them that come to him, that truly repent and believe on him. The Merit of Christ's Death exceeds the Merit of all Sin; *Mat. 12. 31.* and therefore great Sinners should be encourag'd to come to Christ. We shall never be eased by Despair or Unbelief; and the longer we stay from Christ, the greater will our Sins be. Let such therefore be advis'd, (1.) To labour to be deeply humbled for their great and heinous Sins. (2.) To consider whether (whatever they have been heretofore) they now find their Hearts willing to leave their Sins, and to be turn'd from them, and to accept of Christ for their Lord, as well as their Saviour; and to be *that* to them, and do all *that* in them and for them, which he hath graciously promis'd and undertaken for all that by Faith come unto him. The greatest Sinner never miscarry'd

by coming to Christ, and the least will miscarry if he come not to him.

Obj. 2. O but I am unworthy to come to Christ, my Heart is so exceeding vile.

Answ. Look over all those that God hath receiv'd to Mercy, and thou shalt never find any Person receiv'd for their Worthiness. Should a poor Beggar, ready to starve, refuse an Alms offer'd him, saying, I am unworthy? We must take heed of that secret Root of Pride in the Heart, which makes People unwilling to be totally beholden to Christ for their Pardon. We would fain bring something to him, some personal Worthiness that might make us accepted: If God hath empty'd thee of thy self, and convinc'd thee of thy Unworthiness, thou art the fitter to come; *Isa. 55. 1.* The way to have our Hearts sanctify'd and made better, is not to keep off from Christ, but to come unto him.

Obj. 3. God is just, and will not hold the Sinner guiltless.

Answ. The way to a present, compleat, and full Satisfaction to God's Justice, is by betaking our selves to Christ, and believing in him. Divine Justice will not require Satisfaction from us and our Surety too. God will say of every true Believer, as *Job 33. 24.* *Deliver him from going down into the Pit, for I have found a Ransom.*

Obj. 4. I fear I am unprepar'd, and unfit to go to Christ; I am not humbled enough: Christ came to bind up the broken-hearted, but my Heart is still hard.

Answ. If Sin is become a heavy Burden, and sore Pain to thy Soul, so that thou desirest to be rid of it, and thy Heart doth loath it; if thou see'st no Help in thy self, nor any Creature, but art convinc'd there is Help in Christ, and dost earnestly desire to be, and art willing to put thy Soul into his hands, whether your legal Humblings have been more or less: if thy Soul be thus affected, thou mayst safely go to Christ, and he will not refuse thee.

Obj. 5. The Scripture says, no Dogs, nor unclean, or unholy Thing or Person can enter into Heaven: I find my self unclean and filthy, and exceedingly defil'd with Sin.

Answ. The Question is not how they must be qualify'd that shall enter into Heaven, but what is requir'd
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of those that may come to Christ. No unclean thing can enter into Heaven : but tho you have been a vile Sinner, yet nothing hinders but you may come to Christ, to be cleans'd by his Blood, and sanctify'd by his Holy Spirit, to be deliver'd from your Guilt, and to have your Nature chang'd, and your Heart renew'd and sanctify'd, and that so you may be fitted for Heaven, *Rom. 4. 4. Rev. 21. 6. Isa. 55. 1.*

Obj. 6. I fear the Day of Grace is past, as to me.

Ans. No Heart that is truly broken and contrite for its Sins, and grieved for its former Transgressions against the Lord, can justly say that the Day of Grace is past as to him : the Day of Grace is not past to any that are truly willing to accept of Christ now. If the Spirit of God now draws and persuades thy Heart to come to Christ, the Day of Grace is not past to thee. Indeed we may justly fear that some Persons (tho we cannot absolutely conclude it) have outstood the Day of their Visitation ; those notorious wicked Wretches, who seem given up to a reprobate Mind, a seared Conscience, and a senseless Stupidity, who run on violently in a Course of Sin (neglecting the Calls of Grace in the Gospel) and will not be persuaded to return to God ; of such there is fear they have outstood their Day : but as for those that are sensible of their former Sins, and heartily griev'd for all their former Transgressions against God, and are now willing to turn unto him ; certainly the Day of Grace is not past as to them.

What remaineth, is to give some Cautions only concerning this Doctrine, to prevent Mistakes on either hand ; with Directions concerning it.

1. Beware of a counterfeit Faith, taking that for true and justifying Faith which indeed is not ; but examine and try the Reality and Truth of it. It is not a bare Assent to the Truths of Gospel ; this may be in the Devils themselves, *Jam. 2. 19.* not a confident presuming (without any just ground, agreeing with the Scripture, the Word and Standard of Truth) that we shall be saved by Christ. Most carnal People that live under the Gospel, have such an ungrounded Faith as this, tho they never truly accepted Christ for their Lord and Saviour, nor are sincerely willing to have him rule over them, and in their Hearts by his Grace and Holy Spirit ; yet

strongly fancying and imagining they shall be saved, not considering how great a Deceit this is.

2. Take heed of mis-judging that to be no true Faith, which indeed is. Do not judg of the Truth of Faith by those things that argue the Strength of Faith, and an high degree of it. A Soul that is convinc'd of its undone and perishing Condition, by reason of Sin, and that there is no Help to be found in any Creature, or in in any Thing, but in Christ alone; and thereupon looks unto him for Help, and commits it self to him, to be saved by him in his own way, according to his gracious Covenant; and is willing to be rul'd, govern'd, and sanctify'd by him: this Soul doth truly believe in Christ, and is in a safe Condition, tho possibly he may not be free from Fears and Doubts as to his spiritual State. The weak Eye of a stung *Israelite* might look up to the brazen Serpent, and the Person so looking might be cured, notwithstanding the Weakness of his Sight. A trembling Hand may receive Meat that may nourish the Body; for the Nourishment dependeth not on the Strength of the Hand receiving, but on the Goodness of the Meat receiv'd and taken in. So it is the Perfection of Christ's Merit and Righteousness, apprehended and laid hold on by Faith, that justifies and saves us. The accepting of Christ, as being appointed and seal'd by the Father to satisfy his Justice, and make Atonement for us; and firmly relying and depending on him, both for Justification and Sanctification, for Pardon and Life; is that wherein the Nature of justifying Faith consists. Assurance is a reflex Act upon this Act of Recumbency, and Reliance on Christ; and is more properly *Fides Justificati*, than *Justificans*: but the vital Act of Faith is not reflexive, but a direct Recumbency on Christ. A weak Believer (that hath a true Faith) resolveth to follow after Christ, and that Christ shall be his Lord, whom he will not willingly offend. He highly prizes and valueth him, and magnifieth the State of those that are *in him*, and utterly dislikes the State of Unbelievers, that are out of Christ. Such an one will venture his Soul on Christ, resolving if he perish he will perish at his feet. He will cleave to Christ, and cast himself on his Merits and Righteousness, whatever comes on it; as the Lepers, *2 Kings 7. 4.* Such a one is in a safe Condition, and ingrafted

grafted into Christ, who hath assur'd us, that *he will in no wise cast out those that come unto him*, John 6. 37. tho possibly he may not have a sense of his Interest in and Union unto him.

3. Beware of mistaking in what sense Faith it self is said to justify a Sinner. That for which we are justify'd, is the Righteousness of Christ: That by which we are justify'd, is Faith. Now Faith justifieth as an Instrument, a Way and Means, or Condition requir'd on our part, tho not perform'd in our own strength, whereby we are interest'd in the Righteousness of Christ. And thus it is imputed or reckon'd to a Believer for Righteousness; and that in opposition to the Works of the Law, which many are too apt to trust in and depend upon. As perfect Obedience to the Law was a Law-Righteousness, so Faith in Christ, that produceth sincere Obedience, may in this sense be call'd Gospel-Righteousness.

4. If you think you have just cause to fear, that for the present you have not an Interest in Christ; then speedily go to him, and give up thy Soul solemnly and deliberately unto him, to do all that for thee and in thee, which he doth for his People; whom he brings to eternal Life. Defer no longer, but immediately go and give up thy self solemnly to him; look by Faith unto him, that thou mayst be saved, *Isa. 45. 22.* and accept of him sincerely to be thy Lord and Saviour. Let this present Day be the Marriage-day between Christ and thy Soul; behold he calleth thee! *Mat. 11. 28. Isa. 55. 1. & Rev. 22. 17.* and hath assur'd thee he will not cast thee out. Encourage thy self therefore to go to him, and this will be a means to be freed from those disquieting Perplexities and Fears, that many poor Souls are troubled with.

And to draw to a Close of this Subject; when thou hast done this, and whoever it is that hath obtain'd good Hope thro Grace, that this Grace of Faith is indeed wrought in him, let such endeavour to get farther into Christ by a more intimate Union and Communion with him. And in order thereto, endeavour that your Interest in him may be more and more clear'd up and evidenc'd to you: Renew frequently your Choice, Acceptance, and Embracing of him; by often repeating it,

we may grow more sound, more strong, and distinct in it. It is the Advice of a holy Man (now with God) that we should renew our Choice of Christ, our first and great Act of Faith in receiving and embracing him, afresh every day. This he adviseth, as that which may be very useful to all Persons; but especially, if either young Beginners in believing, or elder Believers under Clouds and Darkness. This the Apostle *Paul* did, *Phil.* 3. 8, 9. and thus it is the Duty of those that do already believe, to believe; *1 John* 5. 13. *These things write I unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God.* And thus closing with Christ afresh by a renew'd Act of Faith daily, every Day will be a Day of Espousals between Christ and you, and so by degrees you may come more to the Sense and Comfort of it. Some (he says) never came to a sight and comfortable sense of their Union with Christ, till they took this Course.

Lastly, Take heed of abusing this Doctrine of justifying Faith, and of turning the Grace of God into Wantonness. Let us take heed of encouraging our selves in Sin, because there is a *Fountain open'd* in the Blood of Christ, *for Sin and Uncleanness*, *Zech.* 13. 1. True justifying Faith unites the Soul to Christ, and they that are Members of him partake of his Spirit as well as of his Merits. True Faith draws and derives Grace from Christ, which purifies the Heart, and reforms the Life. Thus the Apostles *Paul* and *James* are easily reconcilable; *Paul* proving that Faith only justifieth, and *James* shewing what kind of Faith that must be which doth justify, that Faith which is a lively working Faith: *St. Paul* arguing against a Pharisee that thought his Works, Alms, Prayers, just Dealings, &c. would justify him; and *James* against those carnal Gospellers, that thought Faith alone, or an outward Profession of Christianity, without Holiness of Heart and Life, would justify and save them. Whereas certainly that Faith, which is not accompany'd with Holiness and Gospel-Obedience, is not a justifying Faith or saving, but a counterfeit Faith, and mere Presumption.

CHAP. IV.

Of Justification, Sanctification, and Holiness of Life.

OUR Blessed Saviour, in that Divine Sermon which he preach'd on the Mount, pronounces those *blessed* that do *hunger and thirst after Righteousness*, Mat. 5. 6. Now there is a threefold Righteousness which we are to hunger and thirst after (and not to satisfy our selves without attaining) if we would be Partakers of that Blessedness.

I. The Righteousness of *Justification*, or Righteousness *imputed*.

II. The Righteousness of *Sanctification*, or Righteousness *imparted and inherent*.

III. The Righteousness of *Conversation*, or Righteousness *express'd*.

These being the immediate Fruits and Effects of saving Faith and effectual Calling, Rom. 8, 30. might be properly treated of more largely in this place; but having spoken of them in the former Part of this Treatise, together with those other great and invaluable Privileges and Blessings of the Covenant of Grace (which all true Believers have an Interest in) I shall refer the Reader to the Perusal of what is written there concerning them, and treat more briefly of them in this Chapter. But of each of them distinctly in their order; and therein,

1. Open the Nature of this threefold Righteousness.

2. Shew the Excellency and Desirableness of each of them severally, and what great reason there is we should earnestly seek after them, and by no means be content without them.

I. I begin with the first, the Righteousness of *Justification*, which in general may be thus defin'd; That it is the Righteousness of Christ laid hold on and apprehended by Faith of a believing returning Sinner, and imputed by God unto him, only of his free Grace, for his Justification; or, That it is an Act of God's free Grace,

wherein he pardoneth all our Sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight only for the Righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and receiv'd by Faith alone. For the opening the Nature of it (more particularly) it will be requisite to shew these four things :

1. It's call'd the Righteousness of God, *Rom. 10. 3. Being ignorant of God's Righteousness. 2 Cor. 5. 21. For he hath made him to be Sin for us who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of God in him.* Now it is not to be understood as if it were God's essential Righteousness, whereby he is eternally righteous in himself; but 'tis call'd the Righteousness of God, (1.) Because it is a Righteousness which God hath ordain'd and appointed, and which he doth approve and accept of, as a Satisfaction to his Justice. (2.) Because Christ, who is the Subject of it, is not a mere Man, but God also. (3.) 'Tis a Righteousness which God doth impute to Sinners, for their Justification.

2. It's a Righteousness wrought by Jesus Christ, resulting from his Active and Passive Obedience : it consists both of his active Conformity and Obedience to the Law, and also of his suffering the Curse and Penalty which the Law requir'd. For in that he did voluntarily take our Nature, and submit himself and put himself under the Obligation of the Law, his active Obedience becomes meritorious. And then for the Merit of his Sufferings, the Apostle hath assur'd us of it, *1 Pet. 3. 18. For Christ also hath once suffered for Sins, the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the Flesh, but quicken'd by the Spirit.*

3. It is a Righteousness, not infus'd into a Sinner, but imputed to him. 'Tis made ours only by Imputation; *Rom. 4. 11. And he receiv'd the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith, which he had yet being uncircumcis'd; that he might be the Father of all them that believe, tho they be not circumcis'd, that Righteousness might be imputed to them also.* It's made ours, not in the Infinity of it, but so far forth as our Necessities require. And therefore the Branch, Christ, is call'd by the Prophet, *The Lord our Righteousness, Jer. 23. 6.* and to the same sense the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 4. 6. Even as David also describeth the Blessedness of the Man, unto whom God imputeth Righteousness without Works.* And *1 Cor. 1. 30.*
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Christ is said to be made to us of God Righteousness.

4. This Righteousness is not imputed by God to all Sinners, but to those who by Faith receive, apprehend, and lay hold on Christ; and is the Righteousness that saves returning Sinners: Rom. 3. 22. *Even the Righteousness of God which is by Faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference.* [Unto all] i.e. it is reckon'd and imputed to all; and [upon all] i.e. it is put upon them all by way of Imputation. And Ver. 25. *Whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation thro Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, thro the Forbearance of God.* And Ver. 26. *To declare, I say, at this time his Righteousness, that he might be just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* Therefore 'tis call'd the Righteousness of Faith, Phil. 3. 9. *And be found in him, not having my own Righteousness, which is of the Law; but that which is thro the Faith of Christ, the Righteousness which is of God by Faith.* See also Rom. 9. 30. & 5. 1. *Being justify'd by Faith, we have peace with God thro our Lord Jesus Christ.* Observe, the Apostle says not, being justify'd by Repentance, Love, Obedience, or Works, but by Faith.

I come next to shew the Excellency of this Righteousness of Justification, which we should labour for an Interest in.

1. By this Righteousness God's Honour is fully repair'd, his Justice and his Law fully satisfy'd. The Law requires perfect Obedience, and the Gospel presents perfect Obedience: Rom. 3. last. *Do we then make void the Law thro Faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the Law.* The very Doctrine of Faith doth establish the Law, because whatever the Law requires in order to our Justification, Christ hath perform'd in our stead. Had Man stood in Innocency, yet his Righteousness had been but the Righteousness of a poor Creature; but this is God's Righteousness, by which Sinners are now justify'd. 'Tis a Righteousness of infinite Value and Worth: there is more Merit in Christ's Righteousness, than there can be Demerit in all our Sins.

2. This is the Righteousness of the Judg himself. The Judg can make no exceptions against, nor find any defect in his own Righteousness, which the Believer has imputed

imputed to him. He will not condemn any Soul that appears clothed with it; and what a Comfort and Cordial should this be to Believers, against the Fears of that dreadful Day?

3. Nothing can secure us from perishing everlastingly, but an Interest in this Righteousness. *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1. and no Salvation to them that are out of him.* Therefore when Christ was savingly discover'd to *Paul*, and the way of Salvation by him, he accounts all his former Confidences to be vain, and nothing worth; he sees Christ is the Gospel-way and only Door to Salvation: *Phil. 3. 7, 8, 9. But what things were Gain to me, those I counted Loss for Christ; yea doubtless, and I count all things but Loss, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffer'd the Loss of all things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own Righteousness, which is of the Law, &c.* Indeed it is natural to every one to set up a Righteousness of their own, and to have Confidence in it. But in the matter of *Justification* all things are to be disclaim'd, but *Christ* and his *Righteousness*. 'Tis true, Graces and gracious Performances are Fruits of the Spirit, pleasing and acceptable to God, and Signs of a saving State and Condition, and the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven; but these must not be set in Christ's room. Nothing comes in account with God for Justification, but Righteousness (perfect Righteousness) and the penitent believing Sinner finding *that* in Christ, wholly rests and relies upon it. Every Man is cast by the Law, but he hath Christ offer'd to him. This gaining or not gaining, this having or not having an Interest in Christ, and his Righteousness, is the standing Measure by which we may judg whether we are yet under Wrath, or in a state of Grace and Salvation, and within the Covenant of Life and Peace; *John 3. 18.* Other Sins bring a Man under Wrath and into a state of Condemnation; but it is his not believing in Christ, and standing only thereby in his own Righteousness; his not accepting Christ for his Lord and Saviour, that he might be found clothed with his perfect and spotless Righteousness, that continueth him under that state. If the Question be, whether we are Sinners or no; all must answer, yes,

yes. But if it be inquir'd whether we be under Wrath or no; nothing can prove any Person not to be under Wrath, but that which proveth him to be in Christ. Grace is indeed a good Evidence of Salvation, but it doth not satisfy the Justice of God. It signifieth we are safe, because it evidenceth we are in Christ: but 'tis not the Cause, nor our fundamental Title to Salvation; tho without it Salvation is not to be expected, *Rom. 12. 14.* And to them that are *in Christ* (*i. e.* really united to him by Faith) *he is Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*; *1 Cor. 1. 30.* This Consideration should be a powerful means to draw us to Christ. All moral Vertues, whilst we are out of Christ, neither give Life nor Righteousness to the Soul. Take heed therefore of all false and imaginary ways of being righteous with God and in his sight. Our own Righteousness is a Ladder too short to reach Heaven, being at best so very imperfect; but Christ's Righteousness is every way compleat and perfect, which God accounts and reckons to true Believers for their Justification in his sight. With what Encouragement therefore may an humbled Sinner rest on it? In this Righteousness let us live, in this let us die, that by it we may be happy for ever.

But here it is to be observ'd, that justify'd Persons do not obtain a full and perfect Discharge and Deliverance from all the Effects and Fruits of Sin in this Life, but are liable to fatherly Chastisements and Corrections, upon the Commission of new Sins, which require renew'd Repentance, and new Acts of Faith in Christ's Blood, for the obtaining the Pardon of them: and this is promis'd only to penitent Sinners. Therefore that place, *Rom. 4. 5.* where it's said *that God justifies the Ungodly*, cannot be understood *in sensu composito*, as if God would justify an ungodly Man while he continues such, *viz.* impenitent and unbelieving; but *in sensu diviso*, of one that hath been ungodly, but now becomes a penitent Believer.

But (as was said before) justify'd Persons are liable to fatherly Chastisements and Corrections, upon the Commission of new Sins and new Transgressions, as it was in David's Case, *2 Sam. 12. 13.* Upon his Repentance it was said to him, *The Lord hath put away thy Sin, thou shalt not die*; tho David deserv'd eternal Death for his great

great Transgressions : but this was wholly forgiven him upon his Repentance, of which see *Psal.* 51. But several temporal Punishments were threatned and dreadfully inflicted upon him, to vindicate the Honour of God's Law, and his Justice in the eye of the World; as we may see *2 Sam.* 12. 10, 11, 14. We need therefore daily to pray, that God would not leave us to our selves at any time, nor to Satan's Malice or Power, nor to the Power of any Temptation, or the prevailing of any Corruption; and that he would put his Fear into our Hearts, that may be in us a constant Preservative against Sin : *Jer.* 32. 40.

And so much of the Excellency and Benefit of the Righteousness of Justification. I come next to speak of the second sort of Righteousness, *viz.* the Righteousness of Sanctification, or Righteousness imparted to the Soul, and implanted in it by Christ.

CHAPTER V.

Of Sanctification.

THE Righteousness of *Sanctification* may in general be thus describ'd; That it is a gracious Work wrought in the Soul by the Spirit of Christ, whereby it is chang'd and transform'd from the corrupt Image of the old *Adam* into the Divine Image of the new; or whereby a Believer being renew'd in the whole Man after the Image of God, is enabled more and more to die unto Sin, and live unto Righteousness. This will plainly appear to us, if we consider, that from the Soul's Union with Christ by Faith, follows a Communication of Grace from Christ as from the Head. So that Justification and Sanctification are inseparable; the one doth necessarily follow the other. *Justification* is a relative Change, the Change of our State; *Sanctification* is a moral Change, a Change of our Natures and Qualities. Here I shall enquire,

I. By what Expressions the Scripture sets it forth.

II. Consider the Nature of it in some Propositions.

1. The

I. The Scripture sets it forth, as has been observ'd before, under divers Names and Expressions; as a *new Heart*, a *new Spirit*, in opposition to the old sinful Frame of Heart; a *Heart of Flesh*, in opposition to a hard and impenitent Heart; the *new Creature*, *Grace*, *Righteousness*, a *being born of God*, and having his *Seed remaining in us*; 1 John 3. 9. *Holiness*, and the *Participation of the Divine Nature*, Heb. 12. 14. *A forming of Christ in the Heart*, Gal. 4. 19. *A renewing in the Spirit of our Minds*, Eph. 4. 23. *Circumcision of the Heart*, Rom. 2. 29. *Spiritual quickening*, and raising from a *State of Death in Sin*, Eph. 2. 1, 5, 6. A *being born of the Spirit*: all which speak the same thing, and express this Work of Sanctification.

II. I come next to explain the Nature of it, in these following Propositions:

1. In this Work of Sanctification the Soul is not chang'd as to its Substance, but as to its Qualities, Principles, and Endowments. Grace doth not destroy the natural Substance of the Soul, or its Faculties; but divests it of its old, and invests it with new Qualities and Properties. The Understanding still remains, but becomes a renew'd Understanding; the Will remains, but becomes a renew'd Will. The Soul and its Faculties remain in this gracious Change, but the corrupt Qualities are remov'd. But,

2. In this Change the *whole Soul*, and all the Faculties of it, are savingly renew'd; the Image of Satan, which is naturally in every unrenew'd Soul, is again defac'd: and as in our first Creation we were created holy and righteous after the Image of God, the Soul is now renew'd unto the same Image again, in some measure; there is a new Disposition wrought in it, contrary to that which was before; the Understanding is savingly enlightned, the Will chang'd, the Heart soften'd, and the Affections rectify'd. And as Corruption, by reason of its Extensiveness over the whole Man, is call'd the *old Man*; so these new gracious Qualities and Endowments, by reason of their general Diffusion throughout all the Powers and Faculties of the Soul, are stil'd the *new Man*: and Believers are said to be created *anew* in Christ Jesus. This is insinuated in that of the Apostle, 1 Thess. 5. 23. *And the very God of Peace sanctify you*

you wholly, and I pray God your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, be preserv'd blameless, &c.

3. No Man by his own natural Power can work this great and gracious Change in himself; it is supernatural, and wrought by the Almighty Power of the Holy Spirit of God. As Creation is the special Work of the Father, Redemption of the Son, so Sanctification and the Renovation of our Natures is of the Spirit, and is wrought by him in every true Believer, *Rom. 8. 30.* and *Tit. 3. 5.* the Apostle says, *it's not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us, by the washing of Regeneration, and by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Phil. 2. 13.* For it's God which worketh in us, both to will and to do, of his good-pleasure. *John 1. 13.* Which was born not of Blood, nor of the Will of the Flesh, nor of the Will of Man, but of God. It is the Spirit of God that doth clearly enlighten the Understanding, and give it a more evident Sense and Discerning of the things that concern its Salvation, than it had before: It's he that does graciously incline the Will to forsake and abandon all known Sin and Evil, and to follow that which is good, which tends to the Honour of God, and the Good of the Soul. It is the Lord who of his own free Grace doth thus open the Understanding, and thus sweetly and powerfully incline the Will, and sanctify the Affections and all the Faculties of the Soul.

4. In this Change the Spirit works the Divine Graces, Qualities, and Endowments in measure (at first) and not in perfection of degrees; as an Infant hath all the Parts of a Man, but none of them gradually perfect: *Phil. 3. 12.* *Not as tho I had already attain'd, either were already perfect.* And there is a renewing of Parts the Saints attain to here: Perfection of Degrees is reserv'd for the other Life, *1 Cor. 13. 9, 10.* yet this must be added, that where these sanctifying Graces are truly implanted, they will be growing and increasing towards Perfection: *2 Cor. 7. 1.* *Having therefore, Brethren, these Promises, let us cleanse our selves from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God. 2 Pet. 3. last.* *But grow in Grace, and in the Knowledg of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

5. Where this gracious Change is wrought, there will be a mortifying of Sin, and a living unto God. The
Parts

Parts of Sanctification are *Mortification* and *Vivification*; of both which I shall speak particularly. And,

I. Of *Mortification*: only premising some Cautions concerning it. As,

1. That Sin may be restrain'd, where it is not mortify'd; as *Abimelech* was restrain'd from sinning against *Sarah*, Gen. 20. 6. The outward acting of Sin may be forborn, where the inward Lust, inclining to that Sin, is not mortify'd or subdu'd, but lives in the Heart.

2. Some Mens Sins rather leave them, than they their Sins: as those Sins Persons are given to in their younger Years, they may not possibly be inclin'd to in their old Age; which may not proceed from any spiritual and gracious Change wrought in the Heart, but from the Change of their bodily Constitution.

3. Mortification does not reach so far, as utterly to destroy, kill, and root out the very Being of Sin, that it shall have no power at all, or residence in the Heart; yet it takes away the dominion or reigning power of it. There is none indeed that sets himself in good earnest to mortify any Sin, but he aims at and desires its utter Extirpation and Destruction; he would so kill it, that it should never move or stir in him any more; and many, by the Spirit and Grace of Christ, do attain to a wonderful Power and Victory over their Sins: yet the Apostle *Paul* himself, that was so eminent a Saint, confesses he had not attain'd it, Phil. 3. 12. This State of Perfection the Saints and Children of God would fain attain, but he sees it best for them, that they should be in a militant state here, fighting and combating against Sin and Temptation; that having (thro his Grace) obtain'd the Victory, they might at last receive the Crown.

4. Mortification consists not in the mere refining and cultivating the natural Temper. Some may be of a very quiet, calm, sweet, and benign Temper, either naturally, or by Discipline and Consideration; whilst (tho they are not hurry'd and transported with violent and tumultuous Passions, as others are) yet several unmortify'd Lusts (such as Envy, Pride, Covetousness, &c.) may still lurk in their Hearts.

5. The forsaking some Sins, and taking up others, cannot be truly call'd Mortification. This *Simon Magus* did. He that leaves his Sensuality, and falls to Worldliness;

liness; or leaves Drunkenness, and grows proud, pharisaical and uncharitable, has indeed chang'd his Master, but he is Servant to Sin still. But on the other hand,

6. Stirrings of Corruption sometimes in the Heart, may consist with Mortification, provided that as Corruptions do stir, there be Strivings and Endeavours in us to oppose them, and strong Supplications to God, to enable us to subdue them. We must distinguish between molesting Sins and reigning Sins: molesting Sins may consist with Mortification, tho reigning Sins cannot. The Lord will never suffer any to perish for that, which is to him matter of Complaint, Humiliation, and real Opposition. And farther we must know and remember, that the whole Work of Mortification is not wrought at once; but as a Child comes to Maturity not presently, but by degrees, so it is in the Work of Mortification, and Conquest of Sin and indwelling Corruption.

I come now to shew wherein Mortification consists. And,

1. Seeing every Lust is a deprav'd Habit, or Disposition, impelling and inclining the Heart to Evil, or hindring from that which is good; one main Work of Mortification is to weaken and destroy this Root of sinful Inclination (as much as may be) that it may not prevail, nor intice to Sin as formerly, *Rom. 6. 6.* And this is call'd crucifying the Flesh, *Gal. 6. 24.* *They that are Christ's have crucify'd the Flesh, with the Affections and Lusts.* And till the Powers and Habits of Lusts within are weaken'd and brought down, the solemnest Resolutions against Sin are never likely to prevail. 'Tis in this case as with a Man that hath the Falling-Sickness; 'tis to little purpose for him to resolve only that he will not fall again, so long as the Matter of the Disease (that disposes and impels him to it) is left in the Body. Therefore Mortification deals with the inward Root of Lust, and labours to weaken that, that so its Motions and Actings may be fewer and weaker than before.

2. Mortification expresses it self in a constant watching against, and fighting with the first Motions and Breakings out of our sinful Inclination. Where this Grace is, there will be an opposing the very first rising and motions to any Sin. This is an Enemy that is not to be parley'd with, but presently resisted and oppos'd.

3. Mor;

3. Mortification bends its chief Strength against those Lusts and Corruptions, to which the Heart is more particularly inclin'd. When the Pravity and Corruption of Nature attempts to exert it self in some particular Sin, then Mortification sets it self in the Strength and Power of Christ, thro the Spirit, to weaken the Power of that Lust, by cherishing a Principle of Grace, which stands in direct opposition thereto, and is destructive of it. So by cherishing Humility, Pride is weaken'd; by cherishing Patience, rash Anger and violent Passions, and Peevishness, are gradually destroy'd. And so in other Instances also, it is done by means of exercising the contrary Graces, thro the Holy Spirit.

I come next to lay down some Rules and Directions for the attaining this Grace, and for the furthering and promoting the Work of Mortification of Sin.

1. Betake thy self to Christ for Power and Strength to mortify thy inward Lusts and Corruptions. For from Union with Christ follows Communication of Grace and Spirit from him, for the enabling the Soul unto this Work; Rom. 8. 13. *If ye thro the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye shall live.* Without him this Work cannot be done: and therefore they that attempt it only by Vows, Penances, and bodily Castigations (as many among the Papists do) tho they may seem to follow after it, yet never attain unto it. They that are implanted into Christ, have the Spirit and Grace of Christ dwelling in them, and so are enabled thereby to mortify Sin: all other ways and means without him are empty and vain, John 15. 5. Mat. 12. 33. When the Soul is implanted into Christ by Faith, then this Work is likely to succeed. The Popish Religion seems to be made up of Designs and Contrivances to pacify the Conscience without Christ; whereas the Apostle says, Rom. 10. 3. *They being ignorant of God's Righteousness, and going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the Righteousness of God; for Christ is the end of the Law for Righteousness (not only imputed, but also inherent Righteousness) to every one that believeth.* The End of the Law is to convince of Sin, and to send Men to Christ for Pardon and Grace, to enable them to subdue it.

2. For those who have by Faith in Christ given up themselves in Covenant unto God, who yet complain of the Power of their Corruptions, and see so much sinful Uncleaness in themselves, that it makes them sometimes doubt whether the Spirit of Grace ever had any abiding in them; let them look unto the Promises of this Covenant, which God hath made with his People: here is a Fountain of Grace open'd unto them to wash in. God hath promis'd that *he will pour clean Water upon them, and will cleanse them from all their Filthiness*, Ezek. 36. 25. Are you leprous and unclean in your own eyes? go then and wash seven times in these Waters of *Jordan*, and so your Leprosy shall depart from you. Go to God, and plead his Covenant and Promise, and say unto him, "Lord thou hast made Promises unto thy Servants, that thou wilt not only forgive their Sins, but sanctify them, and make them an holy People unto thee; why then am I still thus corrupt, sinful, and unclean?" "Lord wash me, wash me thoroughly, till I am clean from all my Sin." We think we must work out our Sanctification of our selves, without a believing Application of our selves to him, for that Grace and Strength which he hath promis'd; *Isa. 45. 24. Psal. 62. 7. 1 John 1. 7.* and herein we greatly wrong our selves. Were there no more Help in God's Promises which he makes to us, than in our Promises to him, we might lie in our Pollutions for ever. Let us seek to the Lord by Faith in his Covenant, and gracious Promises treasur'd up therein; say as *Jehosaphat*, *Lord, I am borne down by the Power of Sin and Corruption, that I know not what to do; but my eyes are unto thee, to subdue and help me against them.* The whole Life of a Christian is a Life of Faith, the Life of Justification, and the Life also of Sanctification; *we live both these Lives by the Faith of the Son of God*, Gal. 2. 20. Therefore we are said to be sanctify'd by Faith, because by Faith we seek for and receive the Spirit of Sanctification, which in and thro Christ is promis'd to us.

3. Take the *Sword of the Spirit* (which is the Word of God) Eph. 6. 17. and let us strike our Corruptions therewith. Gather together such Threatnings out of the Book of God, as are particularly directed against those Lusts which we find most stirring in us: as for instance, if

if Pride be thy Distemper, and the Lust thereof, take that Sword of the Spirit, 1 Pet. 5. 5. *Be clothed with Humility, for God resisteth the Proud, and giveth Grace to the Humble.* If Anger or Hatred against thy Brother be working in thee, take that Sword, Eph. 4. 26, 27. *Be ye angry and sin not, let not the Sun go down upon your Wrath, neither give place to the Devil.* 1 John 3. 15. *Whosoever hateth his Brother, is a Murderer; and ye know that no Murderer hath eternal Life abiding in him.* If Revenge be stirring in thee, take that Sword, Mat. 6. 14, 15. *For if ye forgive Men their Trespases, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not Men their Trespases, neither will your Father forgive your Trespases.* If unclean Lusts be stirring, make use of that Sword, Mat. 5. 28. If Covetousness, take that, Luke 12. 15. & 1 Tim. 6. 10. and the like futable Scriptures in all other Instances. Thus being well acquainted with the Word of God, we may find a futable Scripture threatning of that Sin; the believing Application whereof, may, thro the Holy Spirit's gracious Assistance and Strength, be a means to destroy every rebellious Lust that rises up in thy Heart.

4. Frequently represent to your self the great Evil and Danger of any Sin liv'd in and allow'd. Awaken your Conscience with a Sense of the Rectitude, Spirituality, and Holiness of the Law, and measure the Guilt of your Sins by that Rule; *How shall we,* says the Apostle, (Rom. 6. 2.) *that are dead to Sin* (dead to Sin by Profession, and by the strongest Tyes and Obligations) *live any longer therein?* Consider also how Sin grieves the holy and blessed Spirit, Eph. 4. 30. how it defiles the Soul, dishonours God, and gratifies Satan, and disables us from being useful in our Generation; God usually blasting the Endeavours of such, who harbour any secret Lust in their Hearts. And farther consider, what a Connexion there is between Sin and eternal Wrath and Destruction; Rom. 6. last. *The Wages of Sin is Death.* Those whom God intends to deliver from Hell and the Wrath to come, he delivers from continuing in Sin, and allowing themselves in it: *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* But who are they? the next words tell us, *they that walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit,* Rom. 8. 1. *For if ye live after the Flesh, ye shall die,* ver. 13. And Psal. 68. 21. it's said, *God shall*

wound the Head of his Enemies, and the hairy Scalp of such as go on still in their Trespases. Let us be much therefore in the Meditation of the great Evil and Danger of any unimortify'd Lust, if we desire to be freed from our Thralldom and Bondage to it.

5. Let us carefully avoid all such Occasions, as are like to give advantage to our Corruptions; and draw them forth, and to betray us into their hands: he that will not avoid Occasions and Temptations leading to Sin, is not likely to escape it. This is one part of that Duty which our Saviour recommends to his Disciples, and in them to us, under the name of *Watching*, Mar. 13. 37. & Mat. 26. 41.

6. In order to the Mortification of any Corruption, deeply rooted in the natural Temper, and to which the Constitution does especially incline, fasting and keeping under the Body is a very proper means: which the Apostle hath shew'd by his own Example, 1 Cor. 9. 27. *I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection.* Fasting is an Ordinance of God, tending to the Mortification of Sin, and weakning the Strength and Power of it; yet let us take these Cautions, that the mere outward weakning and impairing the Body is not Mortification, but a Means only conducing to it, to the weakning of any Lust and Corruption in its natural Root and Seat. Fasting and Watching, &c. are to be look'd upon therefore only as Means which the Spirit of God makes use of, and blesteth, for the accomplishing of his own Work: Use them as a Means, yet as a Means only in the hand of the Spirit.

7. As we must act Faith in Christ, and in those great and gracious Promises of the Covenant in him, for a Supply of Grace and Strength, to enable us to master and subdue any of those unruly Lusts and Corruptions which may annoy us; so we must diligently attend on all those other Ways and Means which Christ has appointed, and wherein he is wont to communicate Strength to the Soul: such as Prayer, Meditation, Sacraments, hearing the Word, &c. in the use of all which, let our Expectation of Help and Relief be mainly from him.

8. Meditate frequently on the Death of Christ. Such Meditations may be very useful for the mortifying of Sin

Sin many ways. (1.) Christ's Death may shew us the Odiousness and Hatefulness of Sin: That must needs be a heinous Evil, which requir'd so great and costly an Expiation. (2.) It should stir up in us a Hatred and Detestation of Sin: Shall Sin live in us, that put him to death for us? (3.) It should provoke us to imitate the Pattern he hath left us. As he was crucify'd for our Sins, so we should labour to crucify in our selves the old Man, that *the Body of Sin might be destroy'd, that henceforth we should not serve Sin*, Rom. 6. 6. And this is our being baptiz'd into the Death of Christ, viz. our Conformity thereunto, in being dead unto Sin, and having our Corruptions crucify'd, as he was put to death for Sin; so that as he was rais'd up to Glory, we likewise may be rais'd up to Grace and Newness of Life. And he has by his meritorious Sufferings and Death procur'd the Spirit for us, to enable us to mortify Sin, that it might not reign, nor have dominion over us.

9. Let us meditate on our own Death, Let us think with our selves we must shortly die, and tho Sin seem now sweet and delightful, it will then be Gall and Wormwood, and very bitter to us. Let me not therefore allow my self in any thing now, that will be Bitterness to me at my latter end.

The Second Part of Sanctification is next to be spoken to, viz. *Vivification*; which is a putting on of the new Man, or a forming the new Creature, whereby we are enabled to live unto God: as we are to be conformable to Christ in his Death, in crucifying of Sin in our selves; so we are to be conformable to him also in his Resurrection, *that like as Christ was rais'd from the dead by the Glory of his Father, so we also (in conformity to him) should walk in Newness of Life*, Rom. 6. 4, 5. Hence the Scripture speaks of *walking in the Spirit, living by the Spirit, and being led by the Spirit*; Rom. 8. 1, 14. Gal. 5. 16, 25. So that this new Life consists in two things:

1. In those holy Principles and supernatural Graces, flowing from Christ the Head, and infus'd by his Spirit into the Soul: Gal. 5. 22. *But the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance.* All which Graces together make up the new Nature, or the new Man, which after God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness; Eph. 4.

2. In the Exercise of those supernatural Graces, and the exerting such Acts and Operations, as are proper and suitable to this new Nature, and which cannot be perform'd by any, but such as are renew'd and quicken'd by the Spirit of Christ, and that are alive from the dead: *Rom. 6. 13.* so also *1 Pet. 2. 24.* *Gal. 2. 20.*

Now the Actings or Operations of this new Nature, are such as these: (1.) Loving God, and delighting in him. (2.) Humbling our selves unfeignedly before him, for all our Sins and Transgressions against him. (3.) Exercising Faith in Christ for the Pardon of all our Sins; living by Faith in him for Sanctification, and for the Accomplishment of all those gracious Promises of the Covenant of Grace, which are *Yea and Amen* in him. (4.) Watching over our selves continually, to keep our selves from Sin. (5.) Seeking the things above, *Col. 3. 1, 2.* setting our Affections on those things. (6.) Sensibleness of God's Dishonour. (7.) Delighting in the Law of God, and walking by that Rule, *Rom. 7. 22.* (8.) Loving the Saints and Servants of God, as such. (9.) Savouring and relishing the things of God. (10.) Resisting Temptations. (11.) Bearing Afflictions patiently. (12.) Performing Duties that are hard and difficult. (13.) Designing the Glory of God in all we do. (14.) Growing in Grace and Holiness. All which gracious Actings argue a new Nature and new Life, wherever they are found.

Now, in the next place, let us consider the Excellency and Desirableness of Sanctification; and what great reason we have earnestly to desire and labour after it.

1. Holiness is a Participation of the Divine Nature, *2 Pet. 1. 4.* it makes the Soul like unto God, to Christ, and to the blessed Angels: *1 Pet. 1. 15.* *As he which hath call'd you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of Conversation.* *Mark 1. 24.* *Mat. 25. 31.* The more sinful any are, the more they resemble the Devil; the more holy, the more they are like unto God.

2. It is the Honour, and Beauty, and Excellency of the Creature. *David* shews what a value he put upon Holiness and holy Persons, *Psal. 16. 3.* he calls them *the Excellent, in whom is all his Delight.*

3. 'Tis that which Christ came to procure and re-establish in the Souls of Men, *1 John 3. 8.* Christ not only

only removes the Guilt of Sin in all that believe in him, but he also sanctifies their Natures by his Holy Spirit, and so makes them a peculiar People to himself, zealous of good Works; Tit. 2. 14. *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

4. It is a substantial Evidence of our Union with Christ. All real Holiness is the immediate Fruit of our Union with Christ: he is to all such, *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption*; 1 Cor. 1. 30. All that are in Christ are new Creatures, and sanctify'd Persons, 2 Cor. 5. 17. 2 Thess. 2. 13. Tit. 3. 4, 5, 6.

5. The Lord takes pleasure and delight in holy Persons; he calls them his Jewels, Mal. 3. 17. the Apple of his Eye, Deut. 32. 10. & Zech. 2. 8. Kings and Priests unto God, Rev. 1. 6. And such as are upright in their way, Solomon says, are his Delight, Prov. 11. 20.

6. Without real Holiness there cannot be any Communion with God here, nor any comfortable Vision or Fruition of him hereafter; Heb. 12. 14. Indeed our Right and Title to Heaven lies in our Justification; but our Meetness and Fitness for Heaven lies in our Sanctification: Col. 1. 12. *Giving thanks to the Father, who hath made us meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* Unholy Persons are full of Contrariety to God: their Natures, Principles, Judgments, Minds, Wills, Affections, Aims, Practices, are all contrary and opposite to God; the Ways of God are not at all sutable to their carnal Hearts, 2 Cor. 6. 14. *What Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness? and what Communion hath Light with Darkness?* We are utterly unfit for Communion with God, till this new Nature be form'd in us, and we are indeed unfit to do him any faithful Service in this World; and as to our Enjoyment of him hereafter, the Door of Heaven and Happiness is bolted and barr'd against all unholy Persons: Heb. 12. 14. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Psal. 9. 17.

C H A P. VI.

Of Righteousness of Conversation.

WHERE there is true Sanctification, and an inward Change and Renovation, the natural and genuine Fruit of it will be a holy and righteous Conversation; which is next to be spoken to. This consists in a serious Endeavour to frame our outward Deportment and Conversation towards God and Man, and also in the due Government of our selves as we ought to do. Righteousness and Justice, is a constant Desire and Endeavour to give to every one their due; which the Apostle Paul was careful to observe, as he himself says, *Acts 24. 16. And herein do I exercise my self, to have always a Conscience void of Offence both towards God and towards Men.* As there is a Debt or Duty we owe to God, to our Neighbour, and to our selves; so in a faithful Discharge of these Debts and Duties, consists the Righteousness of Conversation here spoken of. And more particularly,

1. All such as are of a truly righteous Conversation, do charge upon themselves to be really pious towards God, and to perform such outward religious Worship unto him as he hath requir'd. There are some that are just and upright in their Dealings with Men, who are yet very negligent and careless of the Worship of God; but these Persons cannot be said to be of a righteous Conversation, being not just towards God.

2. They charge upon themselves to be just and upright in their Dealings with Men; they oblige themselves to a strict Observance of Faithfulness, Truth, and Honesty in all their Transactions; so as that all Lying, Defrauding, Falseness, Cheating and Oppression of every sort, may be avoided. And to this Head may be refer'd Faithfulness in the discharge of relative Duties, (which every true Christian charges himself with) as a Branch of that Righteousness he owes to Man.

3. They charge upon themselves to express a Charity and Good-will towards those among whom they live,
being

Of Righteousness of Conversation. 313

being ready to do Kindnesses and good Offices, as becometh the Redeemed of Christ. They oblige themselves to eschew all Backbiting, Slandering, and Defaming their Neighbour, or being injurious unto him. This is a Debt they find themselves oblig'd to pay to Men.

4. They charge upon themselves to be sober, chaste, and temperate in the Government of themselves, shunning and avoiding all Luxury, Excess, Filthiness, and Leudness: Tit. 2. 11. *For the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appear'd to all Men, teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.* These are the main Branches of this Righteousness of Conversation.

The Excellency and Desirableness of it, so as that we may be provok'd earnestly to labour after it, may appear in that,

1. God is exceedingly honour'd hereby. The more eminent any Person is in Holiness and Righteousness, the more convincingly and clearly he exalts and glorifies God, and proclaims his Goodness and Holiness before the World: John 15. 8. *Herein is my Father glorify'd, that ye bear much fruit, so shall ye be my Disciples.*

2. Holiness and Righteousness is the very Livery and Mark of Christ's Followers: Psal. 4. 3. *Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly, for himself.* As the Worshipers of the Beast are known by the Mark of the Beast that is upon them, so Christ's true Disciples are known by their righteous and holy Conversation. If any have not this Seal upon them, let them pretend what they will, Christ will one day unmask them, and bring them forth with the Workers of Iniquity.

3. Holiness and Righteousness is very winning and attractive; 'tis like a precious Perfume, whose sweet Saviour spreads it self far and wide: 1 Pet. 3. 1.

4. Hereby Christ's Kingdom is promoted, and the Kingdom of Sin and Satan beat down. When Truth, the Purity of God's Worship, and the Power and Life of Godliness prevail in any place, then Christ's Kingdom prevails. But when Errour, false Worship, or Wickedness prevail, then the Devil's Kingdom gets ground.

5. Holy and righteous Persons are a publick Good, and a Blessing to the places where they live, and keep off publick Calamities. Such Persons, with *Moses*, stand in

in the gap; *Psal. 106. 23. He said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his Chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his Wrath, lest he should destroy them. Prov. 14. 34. Righteousness exalteth a Nation, but Sin is the Reproach of any People. Jer. 5. 1. Run ye to and fro thro the Streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know; Seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a Man, if there be any that executeth Judgment, that seeketh the Truth, and I will pardon it; Ezek. 9. 4.*

6. God will one day gloriously own them who have so appear'd for and own'd him here; that have borne their Testimony against the Wickedness of the World, by a holy and convincing Conversation: *1 Sam. 2. 30. Those that honour me, I will honour; and those that despise me, shall be lightly esteem'd. Luke 9. 26. Whosoever shall be asham'd of me and my Words, of him shall the Son of Man be asham'd when he shall come in his own Glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy Angels.*

To close this Chapter, let all who desire to be truly holy and righteous, be exhorted also to study much the Divine Laws and Commands of God, to consider the Duties commanded and Sins forbidden in them; and also the Precepts of our blessed Lord and Saviour, many of which are contain'd in that divine Sermon of his upon the Mount, recorded in *Mat. 5, 6, & 7th Chapters.*

C H A P. VII.

Of Uprightness.

IT is a matter that infinitely concerns us, both in respect of our present Peace and Comfort, and future Blessedness, to make a true Discovery of our *Uprightness*. All the Fears and Inquiries about our spiritual State usually issue in this, whether we are upright or not. And an Assurance hereof will afford us full Relief under all perplexing Jealousies about the Favour of God, and our Interest in the Covenant of Grace. What the Lord promis'd *Abraham, Gen. 17. 1.* he promises likewise to all his People, that he will be an *all-sufficient God*

to them; and therefore he requires of us, as he did of him, that we should be *upright with him*. He will be all-sufficient to his People that depend upon him, he will be wholly theirs that will be wholly his: *I am God all-sufficient, walk before me, and be thou perfect* [or upright.] He speaks not of an absolute Perfection of degrees, in the Fulness of all Graces, which is only aim'd at in this Life, and towards which a Man by Watchfulness and Diligence may come nearer and nearer, but is never attain'd till we come to Heaven, amongst the *Spirits of Just Men made perfect*, Heb. 12. 23. But he speaketh of the Perfection of Parts, and of the Truth of Grace in every part, expressing it self in an Unfeignedness of Will and Endeavour; which is Uprightness. See *Jos. 24. 14. 1 Chron. 28. 9.* And the Apostle tells us, that since *Christ our Passover is sacrific'd for us, we must keep the Feast* [of unleavened Bread] (which shadoweth forth the whole time of our Life here) *with the unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth*; 1 Cor. 5. 8. For,

1. The Lord himself, who requireth it of us, is perfect and upright, *Mat. 5. 40.* He is Truth, and he loves Truth in the inward Parts: all his Works are done in Truth, and there was no Guile ever found to be either in the Mouth, Hand, or Heart of our Head, Jesus Christ. Now we should labour to please God, and be like our Father, and like our Head Christ Jesus, following his Steps.

2. Whatever we do that is right in God's sight, in respect of the matter of our Actions, is of no avail, if in the Truth and Disposition of the Soul we be not upright therein. The best Action void of Uprightness is like a well-proportion'd Body without Life: and that is counted as not done at all to God, which is not done in Uprightness. It's said of *Amaziah*, he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but he did it not in Uprightness, he did it not with a perfect Heart.

3. The best Actions without Uprightness do not only lose their Goodness, but in God's account are held to be abominable Evils. Such were the Prayers and Sacrifices of the hypocritical Jews, *Isa. 1. 15.* for God holdeth such Actions and Services to be mere Flattery, Lying, and mocking him to his face; *Psal. 78. 36, 37.*

Now if we take the Candle of the Lord, and impartially observe and search our selves, tho the Heart be
such

such a dark Labyrinth, that every secret turning in it cannot be discover'd, tho all the Deflections and Errors of our Ways cannot be exactly known; yet we may understand the habitual Frame of our Hearts, and the general Bent and Course of our Lives: which may help us in making a right Judgment of our spiritual State.

And because there is none so ready to presume and say he is upright, as the Hypocrite is, as *Ephraim*, *Hos.* 12. 8. nor any so ready to doubt whether they are upright, as the tender-hearted and sincere Christian; as *David*, *Psal.* 51. 10. when he pray'd to have *a right Spirit renew'd in him*, to prevent the Danger of Presumption in the one, and for the Support and Comfort of the other; it will be necessary to shew what Uprightness is, and by what signs we may know whether we be upright or no.

A Description of Uprightness. Christian Uprightness is a saving Grace of the Holy Ghost, wrought in the Heart of Man rightly inform'd in the Knowledge of God in Christ, whereby his Heart standeth so intirely and sincerely right to God-ward, that in the true Disposition, Bent, and firm Determination of his Will, he would in every Faculty and Power of Soul and Body approve himself to God, to be such a one as he would have him to be, and would do whatsoever God would have him to do.

The proper Seat of this Grace of Uprightness is in the Will, and is peculiar to those, and only those, who are effectually call'd, and savingly renew'd by the Holy Spirit of God; the Spring hereof in Man is a sound Knowledge of God and of his Will, touching those things which the Will should chuse and refuse; and from Faith in Christ Jesus, the Conduit-Pipe thro which every Believer doth, of his Fulness of Uprightness, receive this Grace to be upright: and hereby it is distinguish'd from that which may be in a mere natural unregenerate Person; for such may be also unfeign'd in their Actions, in their kind, doing what they do in their Ignorance] and Blindness, without dissimulation either with God or Man; as *St. Paul*, before his Conversion he did as he thought he *ought* to do, *Acts* 26. 9.

But a truly upright Man would, in all his Faculties and Powers, and in all his Actions, universally both for Subject and Object, be upright; he would be entire and sincere

sincere in all his Parts, and in all Things he would make God's Will, reveal'd in his Word and Works, to be his Will, and God's known Ends to be his Ends.

This holy Uprightness expresseth it self, (1.) In a well-grounded and unfeign'd Purpose and Resolution to cleave to the Lord, and to make God's Will to be his Will. (2.) In an unfeign'd Desire and Longing of the Heart to attain the same, and to live worthy of the Lord in all well-pleasing; longing (with *David*) after God's Precepts, to be and do as God would have him to be and do. (3.) In a true Endeavour to exercise, according to the Strength and Measure of Grace receiv'd, to be and to do according to these Resolutions and Desires, *Psal.* 119. 57, 106. & 119. 40. *Acts* 24. 16.

To endeavour truly, is to exercise the Head with Study how, and the Heart with Will and Desire, and the whole outward Man to do their utmost, putting to their whole Strength, Understanding, and Skill, and their whole Will, to *subdue Sin*, and to be *strengthen'd in Grace*, edify'd and built up more and more; removing, or breaking thorow every Lett, shunning all Occasions of Evil, or whatsoever may strengthen Sin; seeking after, and embracing all Opportunities and Means to be strengthen'd in the inward Man, *Phil.* 3. 11, 15. If one Means will not be sufficient, and if there are others to be us'd, they will find out and use them also; they not only seek, but strive in seeking, as hard Students, as good Warriors, and Wrestlers, *1 Cor.* 9. 24, 25, 26, 27. and as those who run in a Race do, so as that they may *obtain*. It's not a bare wishing and woulding for a Fit, or an ordinary seeking, but an earnest *striving to enter in at the strait Gate*, *Luke* 13. 24. that gives admittance into the way of Holiness, and into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Now as to Endeavour, there being some who presumptuously think they endeavour sufficiently, when they do not, and others that they do not, when yet they do; and because they cannot bring into act always that which they labour for, or because they see Over-sights, Neglects, or some Faintings in their Endeavours, they think their Endeavours are to no purpose; that you may rightly judg whether you be upright or no therein, I would lay down,

1. Some Rules for Direction to rectify the Judgment.

2. Some

2. Some Marks of Uprightness, in order to the Trial and Discovery of our selves; premising only this, that if we do what we can according to the strength of Grace receiv'd, *Mark 14. 8. 2 Cor. 8. 12.* or according to the Condition of State wherein we are, which is sometimes better, and sometimes worse; if we see our Failings in our Endeavours, and bewail them, look up for the Pardon of them thro Christ, resolving by his Grace, and in his Strength, to strive to do better, and to rectify what we at any time find amiss: This is true Endeavour, that which God, for Christ's sake, doth accept of. For since great and earnest Endeavour is a part of our Holiness, we must not think that it will be perfect in this Life, *Mark 14. 8.* but if it be true and sincere, it will be accepted; and for this we should be very thankful.

(1.) Uprightness itself being part of Sanctification, is not fully perfect in any here, but is mix'd with much Hypocrisy, conflicting one against the other, *Rom. 7.* It hath its Degrees, sometimes more, sometimes less; in some things more, in some things less, according as either part prevaileth in the Opposition, and as we grow or decline in other principal and fundamental Graces.

(2.) A Person is not to be call'd an upright Man, or an Hypocrite, because of some few Actions, wherein he may shew Uprightness or Hypocrisy; for an Hypocrite may do some upright Actions, in which he doth not dissemble, tho he cannot be said to do them in Uprightness, as *Jehu, 2 Kings 10.* and the best Man may do some hypocritical and guileful Actions, as (in the matter of *Uriah*) *David* did: compare *2 Sam. 11.* with *1 Kings 15. 8.*

We must therefore judg of our Uprightness, as hath been said, rather by the Will, Bent and Inclination of our Soul, and our Desires and true Endeavours to well-doing in the whole Course of our Life, than by any particular Act, or by our power to do.

(3.) Tho Uprightness is to be judg'd by the Bent and upright standing of the Heart, for and unto God; yet wherever it is, it will shew it self, in Mens Actions in the Course of their Lives: only in judging of them, we must not judg them so much by the Largeness and Greatness of the Quantity, as by the Soundness, Ripeness, and Goodness of the Quality. A little sound and true Fruit, tho

the weak in comparison, is better than many Blades and Blossoms, yea than plenty of Grapes, if they be wild and sour.

In the next place I come to lay down some Marks and Signs of Uprightness.

I. The upright Man is universal in his Respect to the whole Will of God.

1. He unfeignedly desires and endeavours to know what manner of Man he ought to be, to know and believe one part of God's Will as well as another, Threatnings as well as Promises, Commandments as well as either; and that not some only, but all the Commands of God, all the Threatnings, and all the Promises: coming to the Light readily, that his Deeds may be made manifest; he is willing to know, and believe what he should do, as well as what he should have and hope for. But the Hypocrite not so, he winketh with his Eyes, and is willingly ignorant of that Sin which he would not leave, and of that Duty which he would not do, and of that Judgment which he would not feel; he is willing to know the Promises of the Gospel, without a true and fiducial dependence on them; he is also willingly ignorant of the Precepts of the Gospel, and of the Terms of the Covenant of Grace.

2. His universal Respect to God's Will, is not only to know it, but to do and submit to it in all things; he is willing to leave and to shun every Sin, willing to do every thing which he knoweth to be his Duty; willing to bear patiently, thankfully and fruitfully, every Correction wherewith the Lord is pleas'd to exercise him; he dislikes Sin in all, he would keep a good Conscience in all Acts of Religion towards God, and in all Acts of Sobriety and Righteousness towards and amongst Men. He would forbear not only those Sins to which his Nature is not much inclin'd, or to which his Condition of Life affordeth not so many Temptations; but those to which his Nature and Condition of Life do most carry him. He will cross himself in his dearest Lusts, in his darling and beloved Sins, in his *own Iniquity*, as *David* calls it. He endeavours not only to abstain from those Sins which may bring Loss, and are out of credit, which some Men punish, and all Men cry shame of; but such as (thro the Iniquity of the Times) are countenanc'd by the greatest,

greatest, and practis'd by the most; the forbearance whereof may threaten and procure Danger and Discredit, or the doing whereof may promise and procure much worldly Advantage and Honour. An upright Man strives not only to do those holy and vertuous Actions, which are in credit, and for his advancement in the World, but those also which may expose him to Disgrace and Loss even of his Life, and all other Enjoyments of it, *Dan. 6. 10.* He also would abstain from less Evils, even from the appearance of Evil, as well as from gross Sins; and would so do the greater things of the Law, as not to leave the other undone: but the Hypocrite is not so, there is some Sin he will not leave, some Duty he will not do.

II. An upright Man is known by this: where God hath laid a special Charge, there he will have a first and special Respect to it; as *to seek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteousness*, that one thing necessary, *Mat. 6. 33.* and to shew a more special Love to the *Household of Faith*, *Gal. 6. 10.* to look especially to the reforming himself and his, *putting out the Beam out of his own Eye*, *Mat. 7. 3, 4, 5.* to be most zealous for Matters of Substance in Religion, and less in Matters of Ceremony and Circumstance only: and, lastly, his chief care will be to apply himself to a conscionable Discharge of the Duties of his particular Calling, knowing that a Man has no more of the Truth and Reality of Religion, than he hath Will and Desire to shew it in the Works of his particular Place and Employment in the World, *Luke 3. 10—15.* The Hypocrite is contrary to all these.

III. The upright Man endeavoureth to approve himself to God, as well in secret, as openly; as well in the inward Man, as the outward; as well in Thought, as in Word and Deed: but it is quite otherwise with the Hypocrite; if he may seem good to Men, it is all he careth for.

IV. The upright Man is constant, his Will is that he might always please God, *Mat. 7. 21.* *2 Thess. 3. 13, 14.* *Mat. 6. 2.* as well in Prosperity as in Adversity; and even then studyeth how to hold out, and to carry well-pleasingly to him, if his State should alter. This is not to be understood of such a Constancy as admitteth of no Intermiſſions in the Course of his Life; a constant running

running Spring may for a time be obstructed and damm'd up, yet will in time get over all Letts, and run with a more full Stream afterwards, so much as it was before interrupted; and so it is with an upright Man: But the Hypocrite is but by Fits and Starts, as he calleth not on God at all times, so it is with respect to all other his Goodness; *Acts* 24. 16. It is but as the Corn in stony Ground, or amongst Thorns; and as a Morning Dew, it endureth but for a Season, *Job* 27. 10.

V. An upright Man is known by the Causes from which all his good Actions spring, and to which they tend; it is from an inward Principle and Power of Grace (thro Faith in Christ, in and from whom, as the Root of all Grace) that he bringeth forth Fruit, *John* 15. 2, 5. and he does it from the Love and Fear of God, and Conscience of his Commandment, to do the Will of God; not only Fear of Wrath, or Hope of Reward, but chiefly Love of God, and Conscience of Duty.

1. Now to try whether these are the Springs of those Duties you perform, consider whether your Heart and Mind stand ready bent to obey every of God's Commandments, which you know, as well as any; and that because the same God who hath given one, hath given all, *Gen.* 42. 18. if so, then you obey out of Conscience.

2. Consider what you do, or would do, when Christ, and his true Religion, and his Commandments go alone, and are sever'd from all outward Credit, Pleasure and Profit. Do you, or would you then cleave to him and to his Commands? This is a Sign, that Love to Christ, Fear of God, and Conscience of your Duty to him, was the Principle of your Obedience; especially if you chuse and endeavour this, when all these are by the World cloth'd with Danger and Contempt.

3. Consider whether you can go on in the way of your Duty, and in a strict Course of Religion alone, and that you resolve to do it, tho you should have no Company, but all or most go on in the way of Sin, and persuade you thereto. This shews that your walking with God is for his sake, as *Noah*, *Gen.* 7. 1. and *Elijah*, as he thought, *1 Kings* 19. 14. But that which moves an Hypocrite to Duty, is either Goodness of Nature, good Education, or mere Civility, or else some common Gifts

of the Spirit; also Self-Love, slavish Fear only, or the like; as in *Ahab's* Repentance, *Jehu's* Zeal, and *Joash's* Goodness, which was chiefly for *Jehoiada's* sake, whom he reverenc'd, and to whom he held himself beholden for his Kingdom, and not for God's sake; 2 *Chron.* 24. 16, 17, 18, 19.

Again, the upright Man's Actions, as they come from a good Principle, so they are directed to a good End: he proposeth the pleasing of God, and the Glory of his Name, as the direct, chief, and utmost End of them; not as if a Man might not have respect to himself and his Neighbour also, propounding to himself his own and his Neighbour's Good, as one End of his Actions sometimes; but these must not be propounded only or chiefly, but as they are subordinate to those chief Ends before-mention'd, and do lie directly in the way to glorify God. Our Saviour, in a secondary way, aim'd at his own Glory, and at the Salvation of Man in the Work of Man's Redemption, *John* 17. 1. when he said, *Glorify thy Son*, and pray'd, that his Church might be glorify'd; but when he said, *That thy Son may glorify thee*, he made God's Glory his utmost End, and the only Mark which for it self he aim'd at. The upright Man's Aim at his own and his Neighbour's Good is not for themselves, as if his Desires terminated there: but in reference to God, the chief and highest End of all things. Indeed such is the Wisdom and Goodness of God, that he hath set before us Evil and Good; Evil, that followeth upon our displeasing and dishonouring him by Sin, that we may fear and avoid Sin; Good, and the Promise of a Reward, upon our believing and sincere Obedience to him, as a Motive thereto. The Lord knoweth that Man hath need of all reasonable Helps, to affright him from Evil, and to allure him to Good; and having set these before us, we may and ought, for the same Ends and Purposes, to set them before our selves: yet an upright Person standeth so strait and only to God, that (as far as he knoweth his own Heart) he resolveth, that if there were no fear of Punishment, nor hope of Reward; if there were neither Heaven nor Hell, *Mar.* 6. 2, 5, 16. he would endeavour to serve, please and glorify God, out of that Duty he oweth to him, that high and awful Estimation which he hath of God's Sovereignty,

reignty, and from the sincere and unfeign'd Love he bears to him. He that ordinarily in doing his common and earthly Business, which concerns his own Good, desires to do it with a heavenly Mind, and to a spiritual End chiefly, that Person stands well and uprightly resolv'd; tho' in Temptations and Fears he doth not always feel that Resolution: but the Hypocrite is not so, he only or chiefly aims at himself, and in his Aim serveth himself in all that he doth. He seeketh God's Will and Glory, not for it self, but for himself; not for God's sake, but for his own: as *Jehu* did, 2 *Kings* 10. 16.

VI. An upright Man may discern his Uprightness by the Effects that follow any good Action.

1. He inquireth chiefly, and observeth, what Good cometh by it, what Glory God hath had, or may have, rather than what earthly Credit, Esteem, or Benefit he hath gotten to himself; or if this latter thrust in it self before the other (as it will sometimes in the best) he is greatly displeas'd with himself for it. But the Hypocrite's great Inquiry is, after he hath done any thing well, what Applause it hath amongst Men? &c.

2. When an upright Man hath done a praise-worthy Action, he is not puffed up with Pride and high Conceit of his own Worth, glorying in himself; but he is humbly thankful for it to the Lord, thankful that he hath enabled him to do any thing pleasing to him, and which he will accept; humble and low in his own eyes, because of the manifold Failings which he is sensible of in that Work, and because he hath done it no better, and also because whatever Good he did, it was by the Grace and Power of God, not by any Power of his own. Thus *David*, when he said, *Who am I, and what is my People, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, &c.* But it is otherwise with the Hypocrite; for he either ascribes all the Glory of what he doth well, to himself; or if he seem thankful, it is like that of the proud *Pharisee*, accompany'd with a Disdain of others.

3. When the upright Man hath begun to do well, he setteth not down his Rest there, but striveth to do more and to be better: He with the Apostle forgetteth what is past, not thinking he hath yet attain'd what he should do; so many as are indeed perfect and upright do thus:

But the Hypocrite, if he hath some flash of common Inlightening, and some little Taste of spiritual things, and hath attain'd to a Form of Godliness, he thinketh (as the Church of *Laodicea*) that he hath enough, and needeth nothing, *Rev. 3. 17.*

4. Tho he have done never so much good, yet in point of Merit and Justification before God, in whole or in part, by it, he wholly renounceth all that he is in himself, and all the Good he hath done, being sensible it was but his Duty to have done it; that what was well was thro the Spirit of God enabling him thereto; that in his best Works he came short of his Duty, and therefore relieth wholly upon the Mercy of God, thro the Merits of Christ; *Neh. 13. 22. Isa. 58. 3.*

VII. The upright Man and Hypocrite are distinguish'd by their different Affection and Carriage after their falling into any Sin; for in many things we offend all, *Jam. 3. 2.* As an upright Person doth not commit his Sin with that full Consent of Will, and that Readiness, which the Hypocrite may and often doth; but always with some Reluctancy and Opposition of Will (tho not always felt and observ'd) so as he can say, it was not he, but Sin that dwelt in him, *Rom. 7. 15, 17.* So after he is fallen into Sin, he doth not hide, excuse or defend it, when it's known to him; or if he do, it's but seldom in comparison, faintly, and not long, his Conscience smiting him when he doth it, or soon after; *Job 42. 3, 6.*

An upright Man will not be much or long angry with any that shall admonish him of his Sin; yea, tho an Enemy maliciously upbraid him with it, as *Shimei* did to *David*, even therein he can see God, and can for the most part abstain from Revenge, and will endeavour to work his Heart to godly Sorrow for his Sin; he is thankful for the Admonition that is given him, and takes it kindly, *Psal. 141. 5.* Thus *David* (a Man after God's own Heart) to *Abigail*, as he discover'd human Frailty in his many and great Falls, so he gave clear Proof of his Uprightness, sooner or later, by his Behaviour after his Falls. He could say, and his Repentance prov'd it, that tho, to his Grief and Shame, sometimes he departed from God, yet he did not wickedly depart from God; tho upright Men are Transgressors, yet they are not wicked. Trans-

Transgressors; tho there be Evil in their Actions, nay, some of them Filthiness and gross Iniquity; yet *in their Filthiness is not Leudness* (as God complains of *Judah*) that is, they are not obstinate and rebellious, standing out against the means of purging and reclaiming them: for when the Lord doth it by the Rod of his Mouth or Hand, in Admonition and Correction, they are willing to reform whatsoever is discover'd to be amiss. And tho they may be often drawn into a way that is not good, and often thro Weakness and Heedlessness, like the Sheep, may fall into a state that is not good, yet they do not set themselves in such a way; *Psal.* 36. 2, 3, 4. nor like the Swine, delight to wallow and lie in it. When an upright Man is fallen, and is recover'd out of his spiritual Swoon, and come to himself again, he is like a Man sensible of his Bones being broken or out of joint; he is not well nor at rest, till he hath confessed his Sin, repented of it, asked Pardon and Grace thro Christ, and made his peace with God. An upright Man is like the Needle of the Mariner's Compass, which by violent motion or shaking may sometimes turn to the West, and sometimes to the East, but stands steady only to the North, and hath no rest but in that point, if it be truly touch'd with the Loadstone: so an upright Person may, thro boisterous Temptations, and strong Allurements of Sin, look towards the Pleasure, Gain, and Glory of this present World; but because he is truly touch'd by the sanctifying Spirit of God, he still inclineth God-ward, and hath no quiet or rest till he stands steady towards Heaven. But now it is quite contrary with the Hypocrite in all these particulars, which may therefore be easily apply'd and enlarg'd upon.

VIII. Lastly, The most evident Mark of Uprightness may be found from your Sense of Hypocrisy in you, and from your Conflict with it. An upright Man is sensible of a great deal of Hypocrisy and Guile in his Heart; *Psal.* 51. 10. so that he often questions whether he have any Uprightness, till he bring himself to the Ballance of the Sanctuary (the Word and Gospel of Christ) he may fear himself to be a Hypocrite: but then there is nothing he would oppose more, or which he more complains of or prayeth against, than that Hypocrisy; nor any thing he longeth more after, or laboureth and prays for more,

than that he might love and serve the Lord in Sincerity. All this plainly sheweth, that this Man would be upright; which thing sincerely to will, is to be upright. The Hypocrite is contrary also in this, he neglects this Guile in what he doth; and if he see it, is not much troubled at it, but suffereth it to reign in him: *He flattereth himself in his own ways, till his Iniquity is found to be hateful*, Psal. 36. 2.

Having laid down these Marks of Uprightness, it may be inquir'd whether an upright Man may at all times discern his Uprightness by these or any other Marks?

Ans. Ordinarily if he will impartially compare himself with them, he may; but sometimes his Condition may be such, that he cannot; as in the case of spiritual Deser-tions, when God, for his Neglect of keeping up his spiritual Watch, and his Neglect of keeping his peace with him, is hid from him for a time, and when in his displeasure he looketh angrily, and writeth bitter things against him. Likewise when he is under some violent and prevailing Temptation, and thereby cast into a kind of spiritual Swoon: now in these and the like cases, he is not capable of making a right and true Judgment of himself. A Man must not judg himself to be dead, because whilst he is asleep or in a swoon, he has at present no Feeling nor Sense of Life.

Quest. Whether is it necessary that we find all these Marks of Uprightness in us, if we be upright?

Ans. No: tho if an upright Person were in case to judg and try himself thoroughly, he might perhaps find them all; yet if we find most, or but some of these Marks, we should stay our selves upon those, till we find the rest. We must take heed we do not, as many do, when they hear or see many signs of this or any other Grace, if they cannot approve themselves by all, will question whether they have that Grace or not. There may be many signs given of natural Life, as Seeing, Hearing, Breathing, &c. and tho we cannot prove our Life by all, yet if we either feel, or breathe, or move, we may know we are alive by any of these.

Quest. What is to be done when we cannot find we are upright, whereas sometimes before we hoped we were?

Ans.

Ans. Do not presently conclude against your self that you are an Hypocrite, but look back to the former Evidences you had of your Uprightness. Tho you have for the present lost your Evidence and Assurance of Heaven, yet give not over your possession of what you have, nor let go your Hope. A Man that hath once the Possession of a House or Land, if his Title be question'd, will seek out his Evidences; and suppose they are lost, will not relinquish therefore his Possession and Right, but search the Records, and get them again from thence: so must we in this case, we must seek for our Evidences again, and intreat our Lord, that he will please to renew them again to us, to give us a new Copy out of his Court-Roll in Heaven, wherein both our Name and Uprightness is written. Howsoever, cleave fast to God, and to his Promises; resolve, not to dare to sin willingly, nor to give over your Endeavour to walk in his ways, and you shall not be long before you know that you are upright: and if you attain not to this, yet be sure the Lord will know you to be his, tho you do not so certainly know that he is yours; 2 Tim. 2. 19.

Obj. But in trying my Uprightness, I find many of the Signs of Hypocrisy in me; I do not find my self to be so universal in my respect to all God's Commandments as I should, I do not hate all Sin alike, I find my self inclin'd to some Sin more than other, and that I am more ready to neglect some Duties than others; nay, sometimes I fear that Sin is in dominion, because I feel an inward Liking and Love to it yet remaining, tho my deliberate Will is against it. I cannot so thoroughly seek God's Kingdom, nor seek after spiritual things, as I should; I am more ready to find fault with others, than to reform and amend my own; I find I am not so constant as I should be in good Duties; and I have too much respect to my self in all I do, and too little to the Glory of God. In reading all the Notes of Hypocrisy, I find much of it to be in me; must I not therefore judge my self to be a Hypocrite?

Ans. No; for Truth of Uprightness may be in the same Person, in whom there is the Sense of much Hypocrisy: nay this, to feel Hypocrisy with dislike, argueth the Truth of Uprightness. Indeed if you felt not so much, you might fear you was not upright. But how

stand you affected to that Affection you feel in you to Sin, and to your Disaffection to that which is good? Do not you hate it and mourn over it, and endeavour in the use of all God's appointed Means, that it may be otherwise with you; earnestly desiring to be upright? All that hath been said (if true) only proveth that you have Hypocrisy remaining in you, and that you feel it; but remember, that not the having, but the reigning of Hypocrisy maketh an Hypocrite. If you see and bewail your Sin, and fight against your Hypocrisy, when you feel it, and labour earnestly to be upright, you may be assur'd you are no Hypocrite. You may and should be humbled for the Remainder of Hypocrisy that you feel to be in you, yet be truly thankful that you feel it, and dislike it, and that it is your grief and burden. Bless the Lord for your Uprightness which you perceive, take comfort in it, as that which he hath been pleas'd to work in you; cherish and nourish it in your selves, and fear not with any distrustful or tormenting Fear about it. Consider how can it justly be conceiv'd, that that Person should yet be a Hypocrite, who from an inward Principle, from the inward Motion of his own Heart, shall with a settled and deliberate Will, out of a Principle of Love to God and Goodness chiefly, and a Hatred to Sin, resolve to his power to abstain from all Sin, and to do whatsoever he shall know to be his Duty; praying sincerely to the Lord for Grace and Strength to enable him to it, and that truly endeavours the same; carefully regarding not only the Matter, but the Manner and Truth of what he doth; and is heartily griev'd when he faileth in either? Such a Person cannot without wrong to himself, and to the Grace of God in him, judg himself to be an Hypocrite. But,

Lastly, To sum up and fully answer all that has been before objected, as to this matter concerning your Uprightness; I shall add only these few Questions following, to which any Soul that can answer affirmatively, may be assur'd that he is an upright Person, that he has an Interest in the special Love and Favour of God, (which he sheweth to such) and in all the Promises of the Covenant, and thereby of his own Salvation.

Qu. 1. How stand you affected to Sin? Are you afraid to offend God thereby? Is it so, that you dare
not

not wittingly sin? Is it your grief and burden that you cannot abstain from Sin, nor get out of it so soon as you would, when you fall into it?

Qu. 2. How stand you affected towards Holiness, and to the Power of Godliness? Is it your hearty desire to know God's Will, that you may do it? Do you desire to fear him, and please him in all things? And is it your grief and trouble when you fail therein, and a joy to you when you do well in any measure?

Qu. 3. How stand you affected to the Church and Interest of God in the World? Are you glad when things go well in it, tho it may be ill with your self in your own particular? And are you griev'd when things go ill in the Church, as it was with good *Nehemiah*, or *Ichabod's Mother*? *Neh. 1. 4. 1 Sam. 4. 21, 22.*

Qu. 4. How stand you affected to Men? Is it so, that you cannot delight in wicked Men because of their Wickedness, but dislike them? tho otherwise their Parts and Condition are such, that you could desire their Company, and to converse with them. Do you love those that fear the Lord, and that delight in Goodness, therefore, because you think they are good, and are beloved of God?

Qu. 5. Can you endure to have your Soul ripped up, and your beloved Sin smitten at and set out by a searching Ministry, liking that Minister the rather? And do you, with *David*, desire that the Righteous should reprove you? And would you have an obedient Ear thereto? *Prov. 25. 12.*

Qu. 6. Lastly, Tho you cannot always have the sensible Evidence and Feeling of your good Estate, or but seldom, or perhaps can scarce tell that you have that Certainty of Evidence at all, which some have: do you yet resolve, or is it your desire, and will you as you are able resolve to cleave to God, rely upon Christ, and upon those gracious Promises which God hath made to us in him, seeking Salvation in him (by Faith) and in no other, nor by any other means?

If you can answer affirmatively to all, or indeed to any one of these in truth, you may be assur'd of a saving Work of Grace in you: and tho you have not so full a Certainty of Evidence as you would desire, yet you have it sure by a Certainty of Adherence and cleaving unto

unto God. God and you are knit together by an inseparable Bond, thro Christ. When you do indeed hate what God hateth, and love what he loveth, and will what he willeth; this is an Evidence that God and you are one: God knoweth you to be actually his, and will for this own you, when you seem to doubt of it; and will always hold you by the right hand, whether you feel it or no. *Psal. 73. 23.*

Such Doubts as these, tho they are an occasion of great Uneasiness sometimes in the Life of a Christian, yet are encouraging and comfortable signs of his Sincerity; such a Frame of Doubting and Uneasiness being sometimes found in the most upright and serious Christians; and finding it excellently express'd in that pious Epigram of the Reverend and Holy Gataker, made a little before his Death; I shall insert it here, being very suitable to this purpose.

*I thirst for Thirstiness, I weep for Tears,
Well pleas'd I am to be displeas'd thus;
The only thing I fear, is want of Fears,
Suspecting I am not suspicious:
I cannot chuse but live, because I die;
And when I am not dead, how glad am I?*

*Yet when I am thus glad for Sense of Pain,
And careful am lest I should careless be;
Then do I grieve for being glad again,
And fear lest Carelessness take Care from me.
Amidst these restless Thoughts this Rest I find;
For those that rest not here, there's Rest behind.*

Quest. But what if a Man find by these Marks of Hypocrisy before mention'd, that it doth indeed reign in him?

Ans. The Condition of such is never to be rested in: he is for the present in a state of Enmity against God, and God an Enemy to him; yet his State is not desperate. If the Hypocrite forsake his Hypocrisy, and become upright, he shall not perish by it: as in forsaking all Sin, so of this in particular, in the Uprightness which shall now be found in him, he *shall live*, Ezek. 18. 21, 22. What Christ said to hypocritical and lukewarm Laodicea, Rev. 3. 19. the same may be said to all such; they must be zealous and repent. Let such look up to the
Fountain

Fountain of all Grace, be earnest and importunate there for it, and by Faith lay hold on this gracious Covenant : from whence it is, thro the blessed Mediator, freely bestow'd upon such as thirst and seek sincerely for it, in the diligent Use of all those Means that God hath appointed.

C H A P. VIII.

Of Fasting and Humiliation.

THAT *Fasting and Humbling* our selves sometimes before the Lord, in a more solemn and extraordinary manner, is a Duty, the very Light of Nature discovers to us ; for the Heathens themselves, we see, observ'd it, when they were either under or apprehensive of any sore Calamity, as in the Case of *Nineveh*, *Jonah* 3. 7, 8. It seems they thought the Threatning of God was conditional, and that if they repented and reform'd, God was so gracious that he would spare them. God often alters his Sentence and conditional Decrees, when the Effect is produc'd which he intended thereby ; as the Case was here.

But we have a more clear and certain Evidence, that it is a Duty incumbent on Christians under the Light of the Gospel ; the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament assuring us of it. See *Isa.* 58. *Joel* 2. 15—18. *Mat.* 6. 17, 18. & 9. 15. *Acts* 13. 3. Our blessed Lord said, that his Disciples should fast after his Departure from them, and we have the Practice of the Apostles again and again for it.

The Case of our selves, of others, yea, of the Church and Nation, may be such, that ordinary Humiliation and Prayer will not be sufficient. For as there were some Devils that could not be cast out but by Fasting and Prayer, *Mat.* 17. 21. so it may be, that such Hardness of Heart may be grown upon a Person, some sinful Lusts may have gotten so much strength, that they will not be otherways subdu'd ; *2 Cor.* 12. 8. *Mat.* 17. 21. The Apostle *Paul* says, that *for this thing I besought the Lord*

Lord thrice, that I might depart from me. And the same Apostle says, *I keep under my Body,* (which probably might be by Fasting :) and hereby, *David* says, he *chastened his Soul.*

So also when the Churches of God are under some great Affliction and Distress, as in the case of *Judah* when *Jehosaphat* proclaim'd a Fast, *2 Chron.* 20. 3. or when great Dangers hang over our heads, either publick over the Nation, or personal over our selves or any of ours, it may be necessary to humble our selves with Fasting.

Farther, when we are to seek and implore the Blessing of God on some solemn Occasion, as *Ezra*, when they were coming out of Captivity to settle in their own Land, *Ezra* 8. 21. So at the Ordination of Ministers, &c. *Acts* 14. 23.

Also when we are to fit our selves for any solemn Service, and likewise when under any sensible Declensions in Grace, that our Repentance has been by any means interrupted or discontinu'd, and that Coldness or Deadness is growing upon us; it is then especially to be, by this means, quicken'd and renew'd. *2 Cor.* 7. 10, 11. *Behold,* says the Apostle, *what Care it wrought in you, what clearing your selves, &c.* They had Care before, but now a greater measure, and a more watchful Care.

Farther likewise, when some special Graces and Blessings are to be desir'd, which will not be obtain'd or continu'd but by the most importunate seeking of God by *Fasting and Prayer.* For,

Fasting, so far as the State of the Body and Health will allow, is a means to remove that Drouziness and Heaviness, Dulness and Deadness of Spirit, which we are otherwise liable to; and also of bringing the Body more into subjection to the Soul, and fitting both for the better performing of holy Duties, as Meditation, Prayer, Reading and Hearing, Examining, Judging, and Reforming our selves; that so both Body and Soul may be brought into subjection to the Will of God more readily and intirely: and being also for a time taken wholly off from the Thoughts, Cares, and Pleasures of this Life, we may be more intent and more wholly taken up in the Work and special Duties of the Day.

Abstaining

Abstaining from Food, is also an open Confession of Guilt before God, and an Expression of Sorrow and Humiliation; it being an Acknowledgment of Man's Unworthiness even of the common Necessaries of this present Life. The Duties therefore that respect the outward Man, are,

1. Abstinence from bodily Food, so far as it may be useful to the great Purposes and Ends of a Fast, and suitable to the Condition and Circumstances of particular Persons. To which is to be added, Rest from any bodily Labour, which may on such a day be spar'd; when we are to humble our selves before the Lord, and earnestly to pray unto him. But it is not enough that the Body be chastened, if the Soul be not also afflicted. Those other Duties that have reference more immediately to the inward Man (to which these are to be subservient) are therefore principally to be consider'd: And these are,

(1.) Serious Examination of our selves, that we may find out our Sins and Guilt. This Duty is to be practis'd daily, but in a more strict and solemn manner at such a time, and especially in respect to our State to God-ward. This narrow Search may discover some secret Infirmities and Sins not before found out. As in reading over our own Works or Writings the second or third time, we espy that which we did not before; so in our Lives by frequent Reviews we may find out some Sins that lay hid before.

(2.) A solemn penitent Confession of our Sins to God. A Fast is for Atonement, and therefore a deep humbling our selves for our Sins, and a penitent Confession of them, is then necessary. And as a Fast is an extraordinary Duty, so our Confession of Sin, and Humiliation on the account of it at that time, is to be more than ordinary. It ought to be more extensive and enlarged in respect of the several sorts and kinds of Sin, and the Aggravations of them, that it may work a deeper Humiliation in us; which is to be wrought partly by awakening our Conscience thro a Sight of the Law, and Apprehension of God's just Judgments due to us for the breach of it; and partly by the Gospel raising up our Hearts to an Apprehension and Admiration of the Love of God to us in Christ: which will tend to melt the Heart, and cause us to grieve and loath our selves for Sin, and withal to conceive hopes of pardoning Mercy thro the Blood of Christ.

Christ. It would be seasonable for us, on such a solemn Day, to read over with great Seriousness those three Chapters, *Ezra 9. Neh. 9. & Dan. 9.* and to labour to bring our Hearts to a more deep Sense and Conviction both of publick and national Sins, and also of our own particular Sins and Guilt.

(3.) Perseverant Supplication, humbly imploring the Lord for the Pardon and Forgiveness of our Sins, and removing those Evils and Judgments which we are apprehensive of, either national or personal, from our selves and ours, or from the Church of God; and for the bestowing upon us, or it, those Mercies and Blessings which we desire, and which are suitable to the Case and Condition of our selves or others. Thus *Daniel* made earnest Supplication to God for Forgiveness, and for turning away his Anger and Fury from them, *Chap. 9. 9.* And therefore Fasting and Prayer are usually join'd together in Scripture.

We should also make a solemn Acknowledgment of the great Mercies we have formerly receiv'd from God, and our great Unworthiness of them. Thus they did in *Neh. 9.* they record the former Mercies they had receiv'd from God. And *Phil. 4.* accordingly the Apostle advises us to make known our Requests to God, with Thanksgiving.

Now these things being premis'd; in order to a more thorough Search and Examination of our selves as is before mention'd, and for the better discovery and finding out of our Sins, it will be useful to set before us the Glass of the Law, for our Light and Rule; and for our help therein, to make use of some Catalogue or Table, wherein the Heads of the manifold Duties commanded, and Vices forbidden, are set down: and herein, tho an Enumeration of every particular Sin, or kind of Sin, or the Heads of every Duty, according to the Latitude and Extensiveness of the Divine Law, is not to be expected (but the Heads only of those which are the principal and most common) yet these may bring to our thoughts (if Conscience is awaken'd) those other Sins we may be guilty of, that are not expressly mention'd in the Table.

The first Table of the Law containeth Duties of Love and Piety to God, the Performance whereof tendeth immediately to his own Glory, and mediately to the Salvation and Good of Man. Accordingly,

I. The

1. The first Commandment concerneth the setting up the only true God to our selves, to be *our God*.

Here we may examine our selves thus, (and so in the other Commandments.)

Q. Do I know and acknowledg the only true God to be such a one as he hath reveal'd himself in his Word and Works; namely, *One only Infinite, Immaterial, Immutable, Incomprehensible Spirit, and Everlasting Lord God, having Being and All-sufficiency in and from himself; one who is simply full of all Perfections, and incapable of the least Defect, being Wisdom, Goodness, Omnipotency, Love, Truth, Mercy, Justice, Holiness, and whatsoever is originally and of it self excellent; the only Potentate, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, of whom, thro whom, and to whom are all things; the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, God blessed for ever, Amen?*

Do I believe *his Word* in all things related, commanded, promis'd, and threatned therein; and that his holy and wise Providence is in all things? Have I him and his Word in continual remembrance?

Do I esteem and exalt *God* in my Heart above all? so that it doth humbly adore him, at the very mention and thought of him, making my self to be nothing in my own eyes; yea, esteeming all Creatures to be nothing, in comparison of him? Have I given Religious Worship to him only? Have I believ'd in him, and in him only? Have I sworn by him, as there hath been cause, and by him alone? Have I pray'd only unto him? Have I sought to him, and to obtain Help of him only by such Means as he hath appointed; giving the Glory and Thanks of my Being and Well-being, and of all other things which are good, unto him?

Is my Conscience so convinc'd of the Truth and Authority of God, that it holdeth it self absolutely bound to obey him in all things? that it doth *incite* to that which is good, *restrain* from that which is evil, encourage me in well-doing, and check me when I do ill?

Is my Will resolv'd upon absolute and unfeigned Obedience, to do whatsoever God commandeth, to forbear whatsoever he forbiddeth, to subscribe to whatsoever he doth as well done? And have I born patiently all which either by himself, or by any of his Creatures he hath inflicted upon me?

Have

Have my Affections been so for God, that I have loved him with all my heart, loving nothing more than him, nothing equally to him? Do I hate every thing that is contrary to him? Hath my Confidence been only in him, and my Expectation of Good only from him? Have my Desires been to him and for him, longing above all things to enjoy his *Presence* and *Favour*, and to have Communion with him? Hath it been my greatest Fear to offend him, or to be separated from him? Hath it been my greatest Grief and Shame, that I have sinned against him? Have I rejoic'd in God as my *chief Good*? Hath my Anger risen against whatsoever I saw cross to his Glory? Have I been zealous for God? and have I made him the utmost End of all my Actions?

Hath my whole outward Man, as *Tongue*, *Senses*, and all other capable Powers of my Body, been ready to profess the true God, and to yield Obedience to his *Will*?

Or, on the contrary, am I not guilty of denying God, in Word or in Works, or at least in Heart, questioning the Truth of his *Being*, and of his *Word*, denying his Providence, Power, or some other of his Divine Attributes? Have I not been ignorant of God, and of his Will, and erroneous and misbelieving, if not heretical, in my Apprehensions concerning God, the Father, Son, or Holy Ghost?

Have I not been over-curious in prying into the Nature and secret Counsels of God, beyond the Rule of his reveal'd Will? Have I not set up *false Deities*, or put my self or any other Creature in the place of God, thro Pride preferring and resting upon my own Way and Will before God's; or by making my self my utmost End, professing God and Christianity only to serve my own ends; or by seeking to the Creature, as to Angels or Saints, or any other Creature, for help and relief instead of the Creator?

Have I not been forgetful of God and of his Will? Is not my Conscience impure, blind, deluded, or seared; and my Will perverse, obstinate, impatient, or murmuring against God, and full of Dissimulation? Have I not set my Affection upon the World rather than upon God, loving that which is evil; yea, hating God himself, if not directly, yet in disliking and opposing his Holiness, shining in his Ordinances, and in his Children;

or as he is a severe Inflicter of Punishment? Do I not fear Man more than God? And have I not been found trusting in the Creature, and making something besides God my chief Joy and Delight? Have I not presum'd, when I had cause to despair; and despair'd, after that I had cause to hope? Have I not tempted God many ways? And have I not, in the matters of God, and of my Soul, been either cold, lukewarm, or else blindly or preposterously zealous?

Hath there not been a Proneness in my whole outward Man, as well as in the inward, to rebel against God?

II. The second Commandment concerneth all such lawful Ways of worshipping God, as he only hath appointed, and whereby he communicateth himself to Man, and Man again maketh profession of him; forbidding (under one kind of unlawful Worship) all such as are not by him ordain'd and appointed in his Word.

Think thus: Have I worship'd God in Spirit and in Truth, in all the kinds and parts of his Worship, publick and private, ordinary and extraordinary; as by hearing, reading, and meditating of his Word; by praying, praising, and giving thanks to him; by a right use of his Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; and by religious Fasting, and making Vows according as I have had any special occasion? Have I done what belong'd to me, for the setting forth and maintaining of God's true Worship, according to his Will reveal'd in his Word? And have I according to my place executed aright, or submitted unto the Government and Discipline of the Church of which I am a Member, and so far as it is agreeable to the Rule of God's Word? or besides the Omission of the former Duties, have I not been guilty some way or other of Idol-Worship? Have I not conceiv'd of God in my Mind, or represented him to my Sense, in the Likeness of any Creature?

Have I not added to or detracted from any part of God's Worship? Have I not run into the Appearance and Occasions of Idolatry; as by Presence at Idol-Ser-vice, or at least by Speech, Gesture, Silence, or needless Familiarity with idolatrous Persons, or by preserving undefac'd Monuments of Idolatry? At least, is not my Heart guilty of not hating, but rather lingering after

such idolatrous Worship? And have I not been guilty of Superstition some other ways? or of Will-Worship, by the mixture of Mens Inventions in the Worship of God? or of any other Corruptions, or whatever is not warranted by the Word of God, tho done with ever so good intent, as in the Case of *Nadab* and *Saul*; for Christ being the only Teacher of his Church, is the sole Ordainer of the Means of his own Worship. *Col.* 2. 22, 23. *Numb.* 15. 39, 40. *Deut.* 12. 32.

III. The Third Commandment concerneth the Glory of God's holy Name, shining forth in his *Titles, Attributes, Religion, Word, Ordinances, People*, or any thing that hath in it any print of his *Holiness* or *Excellency*; forbidding the taking it in vain, and that in all Actions either religious or common.

Qu. Have I glorify'd God, by answering my holy Profession in an holy and unblamable Conversation, and by performing all holy Duties, with due Preparation, Knowledge, and Devotion; also by thinking and speaking of the Name and Holy Things of God with holy Reverence; and in particular, by fearing and making conscience of an Oath?

Or have I not caus'd the Name, Religion, and People of God, to be ill thought of, and dishonour'd by my evil Course of living; or by committing some gross Sin? Am I not guilty of rash, unprepar'd, heedless, forgetful, and fruitless Reading, Hearing, receiving the Sacraments, or Performance of any other part of the Worship of God?

Have I not thought or spoken blasphemously or contemptuously of God? Have I not used the Name of God needlessly, rashly, wickedly or falsely, in swearing when necessary, and requir'd by lawful Authority; or lightly, in any of my Expressions or Communications?

Have I not abus'd the Name of God, his Scriptures, his Ordinances and Creatures, using them for other Purposes than he alloweth; as for Sports, Spells, Charms, or any Luxury, &c?

Have I not pass'd by the great Works of God's Power, Mercy and Judgments, without due Observation and Acknowledgment of God therein?

IV. The Fourth Commandment concerns the ordinary solemn Time of the Service and Worship of God, requiring that the seventh Day, now our Lord's Day, be kept with an holy Rest.

Q. Have I upon the six Days remembered the Lord's Day, that I might dispatch all my worldly Business, and prepare my Heart for it, that when it came, I might keep it an holy Christian Sabbath to the Lord? Did I, according as my Health would permit, rise early on that Day?

Have I perform'd my daily, both Morning and Evening, Exercises of Religion alone, and with my Family that day in Prayer? Have I caus'd all under my Authority, according to my power, to rest from all manner of Works not truly necessary, and also from worldly Sports; also my self to rest not only from the Labour of my Body, but of my Mind in all worldly Business: except about things which concern common Honesty and Comeliness, Works of Mercy, and such Works of Necessity as could not be done before, nor stay to be done afterwards?

Have I always prepar'd my Heart before I went into the House and Presence of God, by Meditation of his Word and Works, and in particular by Examination and Reformation of my Ways; also by Prayer, Thanksgiving, and holy Resolution to carry my self as in God's presence, and to hear and obey whatsoever I should be taught out of his Word?

Have I caus'd my Family to go with me to the publick Worship of God, and in due time; and being there, did stay the whole time of Prayer, Reading, Preaching the Word, singing of Psalms, receiving and administering the Sacraments, even that of Baptism when any are baptiz'd? Did I attend diligently, and join with the Minister and the rest of the Congregation, in all these holy Exercises?

Did I spend the Day, after the publick Worship and Service of God, in Meditation; or, as I had opportunity, in Conference, Repetition of what I had heard, in visiting the Sick, and other Works of Mercy, in Catechizing, or in some other Exercises of God's Worship, either in my Family or Closet? And so from the be-

ginning to the end of the Day, have I been employ'd in holy Thoughts, Words, and Actions; and all this with spiritual Delight?

Or am I not guilty of forgetting the Sabbath before it came, or neglecting and profaning it when it came; as by mere Idleness, and taking opportunity of Leisure from the Business of my Calling, to spend that precious time which should be improv'd for the furtherance of my Sanctification and Salvation, either in any idle Visit, or some other way vainly and unprofitably? Have I not, been negligent whether my Servants or Children did sanctify the Day and keep it holy? or did I my self mispend any part of that time in vain and worldly Thoughts?

Have I not done any of those Works which were unsuitable to the Work and Duties of the Day, or discoursed of them; which tho lawful on other Days, are forbidden to be done or discours'd of in it?

Have I not under the Name of recreating my Mind, and fitting it for the Duties of this Day, sought my own Pleasure, and done those things which cause the Mind to be more indispos'd to the due Performance of holy Duties than the Labours of my Calling would do, to which they are subordinate, and with them forbidden to be done on that Day?

Hath not the strict Observance of the Sabbath been at least tedious to me, so that I could have wished it had been over long before it was ended?

The second Table concerneth Duties of *Love* and *Righteousness* towards *Man*, the Performance whereof tendeth immediately to the Good of Man, but mediately to the proof of his being truly religious, and to the Glory of God.

God made Man not to be *alone*, nor to be all for *himself*; therefore for the greater Good of Mankind, he hath endu'd Men with Variety of Gifts, and Degrees of Place: Some excel others both in *Family*, *Church*, and *Commonwealth*; yet so, as each is excellent in his Gift and Place; even the meanest is made worthy of Respect from the greatest, because of his Usefulness for the common Good, even as the least Member of the natural Body

Body is truly useful, and to be respected, as well (tho not so much) as the most honourable.

Now when all the Members of the Body Politick do acknowledge the several Gifts and mutual Use one of another, according to their place; then is there a sweet Harmony in the Society of Man, and there is a sure Foundation laid of all good Offices of Love between Man and Man.

V. Wherefore God in this fifth Commandment provideth that the Order which he had set amongst Men, should be inviolably observ'd; requiring all Inferiours, under the name of Children, to honour their Superiours, that is, to acknowledg the Dignity and Excellency which is in another, shewing it in giving due Respect to his Person and Name: implying, that all Superiours should walk worthy of Honour, and that they should mutually shew good Respect to their Inferiours, tendering their Good as well as their own.

Touching this fifth Commandment, think thus: Do I live in a lawful *Calling*? Have I walked worthy my general Calling of Christianity, and discharg'd my particular Calling; imploying the Gifts which God hath given me, for the Good of the Society of Man, in *Family, Church, or Commonwealth*?

Have I honour'd all Men, in that they were made after the Image of God, and have yet some Remains thereof, and are capable of having it renew'd, if it be not renew'd already in them, and because they are or may be useful for the common Good of Man; using them with all Courtesy and kind Respects (excepting when and wherein they have made themselves vile by open Wickedness, so that it will not stand with the Glory of God, the Good of others, or of themselves, or with the Discharge of my Place, to shew them countenance?) Have I shew'd a due Respect to others, in praying for them, and (as there was occasion) in giving thanks on their account? Have I conceiv'd the best that in Charity I could of others? by Love endeavouring (according to my place) to cure their grosser Evils, and to cover their Infirmities? Have I to my power furthered my Neighbour's good Name and Reputation; and have I been contented, nay desirous that he should

be esteem'd as well, nay better than my self? And have I both in his Life-time and after his Death, given him that Honour, and exercis'd that Humanity, in decent and comely Burial, or otherways, as far as it any ways belong'd to me? And also in maintaining his wronged Reputation, &c? Have I, being before others in Gifts in any kind, as Parts, Learning, Wealth, Strength, &c. employ'd those Gifts for the Honour and Glory of God, and the Good of Men, for which I receiv'd them?

As I am before others in Years, am I before them in Gravity, good Counsel, and good Example?

As I am above others in Authority, do I acknowledg that it is not originally in me, but confer'd upon me from God; and have I held it, and us'd it for him, keeping within the due limits thereof, governing with Wisdom and Moderation those that were under my charge? procuring the Good of their Bodies and Souls, so far as lay in me, and commanding things only lawful and convenient; encouraging them in well-doing by due Commendation and Rewards, preventing Evil as much as I could, and restraining it in them by seasonable and due Reproofs, according to the Quality of the Offence, and of the Person, when fairer means would not prevail?

As I am an Equal, have I esteem'd others better than my self, and striven in Honour to prefer them?

As I am behind others in Gifts and Age, have I in Word and in my Carriage own'd them with due Reverence, and thankfully made use of their good Parts and Experiences?

As I am under Authority, whether in Family, Church, or Commonwealth, have I submitted my self to all my Governours, reverencing their Persons, obeying readily all their lawful Commands, that are within the compass of their Authority? Have I receiv'd their Instructions, and borne patiently and fruitfully their Reproofs and Corrections?

Or do I not live without a lawful Calling and Employment, or idly and unprofitably in it? Have I not bury'd or abus'd my Talent and Place, to the hurt, rather than the good of my self and others? Have I not been high-minded, esteeming better of my self than there

there was cause, hunting after the vain Applause of Men? Have I not despis'd others, yea, those that were good, yea, my Superiours; shewing it by my irreverent Gestures or Speeches to them, or of them? Have I not some way or other detracted from, and diminish'd the Credit of others, or at least envy'd their due Estimation?

As I am a Superiour, have I not carry'd my self insolently, lightly, or dissolutely?

As I am under Authority, have I not carry'd my self stubbornly and undutifully?

VI. God having set an Order in human Society, he doth next provide for the *Life* and *Safety* of the Person of *Man*, who must keep this Order, and make this Society, by forbidding in the sixth Commandment whatsoever may *take it away* or *impair it*. Let me therefore enquire thus:

Q. Have I had a due care of my own Health, in a sober Use of Meat, Drink, Labour, Sleep, Recreation, Physick, or whatever else is apt to procure and further Health, or to prevent Diseases?

Have I been, or am I meek, patient, long-suffering, or easy to be appeased? Apt to forgive Injuries, full of Compassion, kind, merciful; shewing all these, in mild and soft Speeches, gentle Answers, courteous Behaviour; requiting Evil with Good, comforting the Afflicted, relieving the Needy, peace-making, and by doing all other Offices of Love, which might tend to my Neighbour's Safety or Comfort? Or have I not thro Impatience wish'd for Death, or neglected the Means of my Health? Have I not impair'd it by Surfeits, by excessive Labours or Sports, by fretting, or overgrieving, or by any other means? or have I not had thoughts of doing hurt to my self or any other?

Have I not been angry unadvisedly, malicious, or revengeful, allowing my self in any surly Gesture or Behaviour, either by Looks, Head, or Hand; or with my Tongue, by mocking, cursing, reproaching, or backbiting, or any other Expressions of Displeasure, without just cause; and thereby grieving, injuring, or taking away the Comfort, and much less the Life of Man, any way without God's allowance?

Have I not been a Sower of Discord, or by any means been an Occasion of Quarrels and Differences amongst Neighbours and Friends, and thereby of the Sin and Discomfort, if not of the Death of others?

VII. The Seventh Commandment requireth Chastity, whereby God provideth for a pure Propagation and Conservation of Mankind, forbidding all bodily Pollution, under the name of *Adultery*.

Q. Have I been modest and sober, possessing my Body in Chastity, shutting my Eyes, stopping my Ears, and restraining my other Senses from all Objects and Occasions of Lust; bridling my Thoughts from lustful Motions, my Tongue from all lascivious Speeches, forbearing all kind of Dalliance and Wantonness? Abstaining from Self-Pollution, or any other natural or unnatural Defilement of my Body either in Deed or Desire?

And being marry'd, was I wise in my Choice? And have I kept the Marriage-Bed undefiled, thro a sanctify'd, sober, and seasonable Use thereof?

Or am I not guilty of any Acts of Uncleaness; at least of unclean Thoughts, immodest Eyes, Ears, Touches, and Embraces; of wanton Speeches, Gesture, Apparel, or Behaviour?

Have I not expos'd my self to Temptation, by running into any Occasions of Uncleaness, as by Idleness, Gluttony, Drunkenness, Choice of any Meats, Drinks, &c. that might provoke Lust; as also by frequenting wanton Company, or continuing in such Company when known, or by unseasonable conversing with the other Sex alone, when it might probably be any occasion of it?

VIII. The Eighth Commandment concerneth the Preservation of Man's Goods, the Means of his comfortable Maintenance in this Life, forbidding all Wrong thereabout under the name of *Stealing*.

Q. Have I a good Title to the things which I possess, as by lawful Inheritance, Gift, Reward, Contract, or any other way which God alloweth? Have I been industrious and faithful in my Calling, frugal and provident? Have I done that for which I receiv'd Pay or Maintenance from others; and have I given to every Man his own, whether Tribute, Wages, Debts, or any other Dues?

Or

Or have I not got my Living by any unlawful Calling? or have I not impoverish'd my self, or mine, by Idleness, luxurious and unnecessary Expences, by Gaming, unadvis'd Suretiship, or otherways?

Or have I not withheld from my self or others (thro Niggardize) that which should have been expended?

Have I not gotten or kept any of my Neighbour's Goods by Fraud, Oppression, Falshood, or by Force, and made no Restitution? Have I not some way or other impair'd my Neighbour's Estate?

IX. The Ninth Commandment concerneth Truth of Speech, the Means of Intercourse between Man and Man, and of preserving Mens Rights, and of redressing of all Disorder in human Society; forbidding all Falshood of Speech, under the name of *bearing False Witness*.

Q. Have I at all times, and in all things, spoken the truth from my heart? giving faithful Testimony in publick or private, by Word or Writing, of things concerning my own or my Neighbour's *Name or Credit, Life, Chastity, Goods*, or in any other thing that hath been spoken of, between me and others? whether in affirming or denying upon Oath, or without Oath, or in bare Reports, or in *Promises*, or any other way?

Or am I not guilty of *Lying*, either jestingly, officiously, or perniciously? Have I not rais'd, spread, or receiv'd false Reports of my Neighbour? Have I not spoken *falsely* in buying and selling; also in commending (by Word or Writing) unworthy Persons, or in dispraising the Good; in boasting of my self, or flattering of others?

Have I not given false Evidence, used Equivocations, or conceal'd the Truth which I should have spoken, or perverted it when I did speak it?

X. The Tenth Commandment requireth *Contentment* with our own *Condition*, the Foundation of all Order and Justice among Men; forbidding the contrary, *viz. Coveting* that which is theirs.

Q. Am I *contented* with my own *Condition*, as with my Place which I hold in Family, Church, or Commonwealth; with my own Yokefellow and Estate? Can I rejoice in it, and also that it should be well with others,

nay,

say, better than it is with my self? Or have I not been full of *Discontent* with my Condition, coveting after something or other which was my Neighbour's (at least by Concupiscence in evil Thoughts, arising from the Law of my *Members*) tho my deliberate Will hath gone against it?

Thus having by the Law examin'd and found out our Sins, we must arraign and accuse our selves, as it were at the Bar of God's Tribunal; representing our Sins in our Minds, as they are in their Heinousness and Mischievousness, according to their several Aggravations.

1. Consider *Sin* in its nature; it is a moral Evil and *Anamy*, and an *Irregularity* in the Soul and Actions, an Enemy to God, the chief Good: it is the worst Evil, worse than the Devil, and *Satan*; he had not been a Devil, but by doing evil: it's worse than Hell, which as it is a Torment, is caus'd by Sin, but it is only contrary to the Good of the *Creature*; whereas Sin it self is contrary to the Good of the Creator: it is such a Dis-temper of the Soul, that the Scripture calleth it a Wickedness of Folly, even Foolishness of Madness.

2. Consider from whence *Sin* in Man had its Original, even from the Devil, who is the Father of it; it came and cometh from Hell, therefore is *earthly*, *sensual*, *devilish*: whensoever we sin, we do the *Lusts* of the Devil.

3. Consider the Nature of the *Law* (whereof Sin is a Transgression) a Law most perfect, holy, equal and good; which would have given eternal Life to the Doers of it, had it not been for this cursed Sin.

4. Consider the Person against whom Sin is committed, whom it highly offendeth and provoketh; it is God, to whom we owe our selves and all that we have, who made and doth preserve us and ours; who, tho we have sinned, desireth not our Death, nor afflicteth us willingly, but had rather that we should *humble* our selves, *repent* and *live*; who, that we might be saved, gave his only-begotten Son to *Death* to ransom us; who by his Ministers maketh known his Word and Good-will towards us, assuring us, that if we will *repent* and *believe*, we shall be saved; yea, by his Ministers intreateth us to be reconcil'd. It is that God, who is rich in Goodness, Forbearance, and Long-suffering, waiting when

when we will turn, that we may live; who on the other side, if we despise this his Goodness, and shall continue in our Sin, thereby provoking the Eyes of his Glory, is a terrible and revenging God; who if we still err in our Hearts, and will not walk in his ways, hath sworn in his Wrath, that we shall not enter into his Rest; who in his Wrath is a consuming Fire, and is ready and able to destroy both Body and Soul in the Flames of Hell for ever.

5. Consider *Sin* in the evil effects of it: it brought a Curse upon the whole Creation for Man's sake, whereby the Creatures are become defective and unserviceable, nay, hurtful to us. From our Sins come all manner of Diseases, Crosses, and Afflictions that ever beset us; and this our Sin, until it be repented of and pardon'd, maketh us hateful to God, causing him to withhold good things from us, and to inflict Evil upon us even in this Life: it defileth the whole Man, and every new Act of Sin doth strengthen the Body of Sin, and worketh a Decay of Grace in us, tho we be regenerate; and if it be gross, if it do not benumb and sear our Conscience, yet it will wound it, and break the Peace thereof (if it be tender) vexing it as Motes do the Eye, or Thorns the Feet; causing Terrors, and Doubtings of Salvation, God with-drawing his Favour and Loving-Kindness from us; and if we be not in Christ, it will in the end bring upon us everlasting Destruction.

6. Consider the *Ransom for Sin*, who paid it, and what was paid. Consider Christ Jesus, who he was, and what he did and suffer'd, to take away our Sin. He, the only Son of God, very God, did lay down and veil his Glory for a time; yea, he came down and left Heaven, to dwell in the Tabernacle of human Flesh, taking upon him the Estate of a Servant; he was poor and despis'd of Men, persecuted from the Cradle to the Cross, and made to shed Tears abundantly; yea, so tormented with the Sense of God's Wrath by our Sins, that for very Anguish he sweat, as it were, Drops of Blood: he was accus'd, condemn'd, spit upon, mock'd, buffeted, and scourg'd by wicked Men, and made to bear his own Cross, till (O oppressed and afflicted Soul!) for very Faintness he could bear it no longer. Then he was hang'd among Thieves, dying the most accursed Death,
and

and (which to him was more than all the rest) he in his human Apprehension was forsaken of God, crying out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Now we may be assur'd, that if the Justice of God could have been satisfy'd, and our Sins done away by a less Price, Jesus Christ, his only Son, should never have been caus'd to pour out his Soul a Sacrifice for our Sins. This our Faith upon Christ whom we have pierc'd, will at once shew us the Greatness and Hatefulness of our Sins, which require such an infinite *Ransom*, and also the infinite Love of God and Christ to us-ward (even when we were Enemies) in providing for us a sure Remedy, which would free us both from the Guilt and Power of Sin. The thoughts hereof will (if any thing will) even melt the Heart into godly Sorrow for Sin, and withal will give us Hope (in the use of the Means) of Mercy and Forgiveness.

That the former *Aggravations* may be more pressing, observe these Directions.

1. We must consider Sin in the *Particulars*, one after another, for Generals leave not so great Impression; therefore *David* cry'd out of his bloody Sin in particular.
2. Judg the least Sin to be damning, till it is pardon'd and repented of in particular, if known to us, and can be remember'd; at least in general, if not known.
3. The greater any Sin is, the greater must be judg'd the Guilt and Punishment to be.
4. Sins committed long since unrepented, and the Punishment deserv'd, but defer'd, are to be judg'd to be as near lying at the door and closely pursuing us, as if newly committed; so that we may look for God's hand to be upon us even at this present moment, and that they, like the Blood of *Abel*, or Sins of *Sodom*, cry as loud to God for Vengeance now, as the first day they were committed; nay louder, because they are aggravated by Impenitency, and by the Abuse of God's Long-suffering.
5. Our Humiliation must in our Endeavour proportion our Guilt of Sin; the greater Guilt, the greater Humiliation.

Let us remember therefore, that Sins more immediately against God, of the first Table, consider'd in equal comparison, are greater than those of the second.

That

That the more Grace hath been offer'd by the Gospel, and the more Means any have had to know God and his Will, the greater is their Sin if they are ignorant and disobedient.

That the Number of Sins, according as they are multiply'd, does increase the Guilt and Punishment.

That the more Bonds are broken in sinning, as when committed against the Law of God, of Nature and Nations, against Conscience, Promises, and Vows; the greater is the Sin and Punishment.

All these things known and consider'd, we must now judg our selves, and pass a condemnatory Sentence against our selves; whence will, thro the Grace of God, follow Grief and Affliction of Soul. Now we shall see that we are become base and vile by Sin, and that we may justly fear God's Judgments: now there will appear cause to be griev'd, asham'd, yea, even confounded in our selves, and to conceive an holy Indignation against our selves.

We may now think thus: Ah! that I should be so foolish, so brutish, so mad to commit these Sins; think of Particulars, to break so holy a Law, to offend, grieve and provoke so good, so great a Majesty, so ill to requite him, so little to fear him, vile Wretch that I am! that I should not only commit Sins of common Frailty, but more gross Sins, so many against Knowledge, Conscience, &c. (*Still think of particular Sins.*) Jesus Christ my Saviour shed his precious Blood for me, to redeem me from my vain Conversation, and do I yet again and again *transgress*? Oh miserable Man that I am, what am I in my self at best, but a Lump of *Sin* and *Dirt*? not worthy to be lov'd, worthy to be destroy'd, one that may justly look to have my Heart harden'd, or my Conscience terrify'd; and that if the Lord were not infinitely merciful, he should pour upon me all his Plagues: wherefore remembring my Doings that they are not good, but abominably evil, I loath my self for my Abominations, and do abhor my self and repent, as in Sackcloth and Ashes.

Thus must we labour to bring our Hearts to deep Humiliation and godly Sorrow for our *Sins*, and likewise for the *Sins of others*; for tho our Repentance and Humiliation must begin with our selves and our own Sins, yet they

they must also extend to the Sins of the *Nation* in which we live, and that *universal Deluge* of Sin which over-spreads the World; *Psal.* 119. 136.

There should also be in us a deep Sense of God's Anger and Displeasure against Sin, all those Sins which we have been guilty of against his holy and blessed Majesty in particular, and which have been committed by us with so many and great Aggravations, as our Sins have been; against so much Light as we have had, so many and great Mercies which we have been receiving from God all our days, and which we have by our Sins so greatly abus'd. This may and should beget in us an ingenuous shame upon account of them, and confusion of face; as the Prophet *Ezra* expresses it, *Ezra* 9. 6. *Oh my God! I am ashamed and blush to lift up my Face unto thee.* So also *Daniel*, Chap. 9. 8. *To us belongeth Shame, and Confusion of Face.*

Thus having search'd and examin'd our selves, and found out our Sins, with the several Aggravations of them, acknowledg'd and confess'd them to the Lord, with deep Humiliation and Abasement of our selves before him upon the account of them; when with fervent Prayer and Supplication we have humbly implor'd and begg'd the Pardon and Forgiveness of them, thro the infinite Merits and Mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ; upon the account of whose infinitely meritorious Sacrifice (and thro his Intercession alone it is that we can hope for Acceptance either of our Persons, or of any of our Performances) we must then set upon the Work of *Reformation*. It is not enough to search out and consider our ways, nor yet to lament and mourn over them, if we do not therewith turn again to the Lord, and turn our Feet unto his Testimonies; *Lam.* 3. 40, 41, 42. *Psal.* 119. 59. The Gospel opens the way, and directeth us therein, thro the Commands and Promises of it, in the Doctrine of Faith and Repentance: therefore

Having first try'd your self by the Gospel, whether your first Faith and Repentance were sound (which at such a time it may be very proper and seasonable to do, if you are under any Doubts or Apprehension of Danger concerning it) then set upon the Duty of reforming, and getting the pardon of particular and later Offences. In the Tryal of our selves, we must put a difference between

tween the Commandments of the Gospel, and of the Law; the Law exacting absolute Obedience, but the Grace of the Gospel doth, thro Christ, accept of the Truth of Faith and Repentance, so that there be an Endeavour after their perfection. See those Marks and Evidences of the Truth of Grace, in the former Chapter of *Uprightness*.

Now in order to our Reformation, and obtaining Pardon of, and Power against our particular Sins:

1. Consider the Command of God, which indispenfibly enjoineth this Duty of Repentance, and forsaking of every Sin; to which is annex'd the Promise of Pardon and Forgiveness: *Ezek. 33. 11. Rev. 2. 5. Mark 1. 15.*

2. Consider also the Command of the Gospel, to come unto Christ, when weary and heavy laden with our Sins, believing that thro him they shall be pardon'd and subdu'd. To this end consider that Christ hath fully satisfy'd for such and such a Sin, *1 John 2. 2. and 1. 9.* yea, for all Sin; and that we have many Promises of Grace and Remission of Sin, yea, a Promise of Grace to believe in him, that we may obtain his pardoning Grace and Mercy thereupon.

3. Consider that there is Virtue and Power in Christ's Death and Resurrection, applicable by Faith thro his holy Spirit, for the mortifying the Body of Sin, and quickening us in Grace; as well as Merit, to take away the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins.

4. Improve this Grace and Power of Christ in you, to an actual breaking off your Sins, and living according to the Will of Christ.

In the mortifying of Sin;

(1.) Take all your Sins, especially your Bosom-Sins, those to which the Disposition of your Nature, and Condition of your Place do most incline you, your strongest Corruptions, and with them the Body of Sin in you: Strike at the very Root, arraign them, condemn them in your self, bring them all to the Cross of Christ, and by Faith see them all nail'd to it on which he was crucify'd; and believe, that not only in respect of their Guilt, but also of their reigning Power, they are all crucify'd with him; [see *Rom. 6.*] dead and bury'd, as is signify'd to us in our *Baptism*. Thus seeing our old Man crucify'd

fy'd with Christ, that the Body of Sin should be destroy'd, we must take Courage against it, and refuse to serve it, seeing by Christ we are freed from the Dominion of it; Rom. 6. 7, 14.

When you thus by Faith put on the Lord Jesus Christ, you will not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh; grieve heartily for your Sins, conceive a deadly Hatred against them, and Displeasure against your self for them: This may, as a Corrosive, be a Means to eat out the Core and Heart of Sin.

(2.) Make no Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts of it, but be sober in the use of all earthly things.

(3.) Avoid all Objects and Occasions of Sin, and abstain from all appearance of it.

(4.) When you feel any Motion to Sin, whether it arose from within, or came from without, resist it speedily and earnestly by the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, 1 Pet. 5. 9. as our Saviour did, Mat. 4. 4. and as Joseph did, Gen. 39. 9. (as hath been before directed under the Head of Sanctification.)

And that you may increase in spiritual Strength, and bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit;

1. Apply Christ risen from the Dead for you particularly, believing that God by the same Power quickeneth us, and raiseth us together with Christ to walk in Newness of Life; reckon your self now to be alive unto God, Rom. 6. 9, 10, 11. being dead unto Sin, and become the Servant of Righteousness. Thus believing in Christ, embracing and relying upon the precious Promises of the Gospel, and the Covenant of Grace, it draws down Christ into the Heart, and doth more and more incorporate you into him, whereby he, by his Spirit, dwelleth in you, Eph. 3. 17. and of his Fulness of Life and Grace, you receive Life and Grace, John 1. 12, 16. and are made to partake of the Divine Nature, flying the Corruption that is in the World thro Lust.

2. Labour to get your Heart affected more and more with Joy and Peace in believing, being justify'd thro our Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. 8. 1. This Joy of the Lord will exceedingly strengthen Grace, Neh. 8. 10.

3. Take heed of quenching the Spirit, but nourish it by a diligent use of all God's appointed Means conducing thereto; by Christian Communion with such as fear God; and

grieving for them, not manifesting our Hatred against them, nor confessing and disclaiming of them before God; these bringing publick Judgments upon the Nation and Church, which we should prefer before our own private Interests) and wherein we may also expect to partake.

These we should therefore mourn for, both the present Sins of the Nation to which we belong, and those that been long since committed, and not yet repented of: *Rivers of Waters should run down from our Eyes*, at least Sighs and Groans should rise from our Hearts, *because of the Violation of God's Law.*

This is to stand in the Breach; *The Prayer of a righteous Man availeth much*, (if fervent) tho' accompany'd with Infirmities: but if it prevail not on the behalf of others, it will be to our own advantage. It causeth us to have *God's Seal in our Forehead*, whereby we are marked for Mercy; *Ezek. 9. 4.* We shall either be preserv'd and shelter'd from the common Calamities and Judgments, or find them sanctify'd to us, and Death itself to be for our greatest good and advantage.

The extraordinary Offerings under the Law, to be offer'd on the solemn Day of the Fast (which in the substance of it is the Standard of religious Fasts) shew that a Fast is thus solemnly to be kept: hereby we prepare and sanctify our selves, and seek to God in Christ; hereby (thro' Faith) we lay hold on Christ, the only true Sacrifice for Sin, and by him we draw nigh to God; and in token of Thankfulness, professedly *give our selves to be an whole and living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God; which is our reasonable serving of him*: *Rom. 12. 1.*

Lastly, Let us take heed of resting in the External of this or any other Duty, without hearkning to God in his Word; *putting away Sin*, *Isa. 58. 6.* and *renewing our Covenant with him*; joining the inward with the outward Expressions of Mourning and Humiliation, without which we cannot hope it should prevail and be effectual. But if we be truly penitent and reform'd from our evil Ways, hating and loathing our Sins, and turning from them to the Lord, striving to seek him, and *return unto him with the whole Heart*; then he will turn to us, his Bowels of Compassion will yearn towards his People that thus seek him, and *he will have mercy on them*, *Jer.*

Of frequent Renewing our Covenant. 355

31. 18, 19, 20. Let us wait upon God, wait patiently for the Issue of these and all his appointed Means. *Faith* secureth us of good Success, 1 *John* 5. 14. but prescribeth not to him either the Time or Way, *Isa.* 40. 13. It *maketh not haste*, *Isa.* 28. 14. but waiteth his leisure, when in his Wisdom he shall judg it most *seasonable* for us.

C H A P. IX.

*Of expresse Covenanting with God by Persons adult,
and frequent Renewing our Covenant.*

AS due entering into Covenant with God is essential to Christianity, so the frequent renewing it, and sweet Reflections upon our Sincerity in making and Constancy in keeping it, are great means of promoting our Comfort and farther Establishment. All the Riches of Grace and Mercy that were in the heart of the Father to bestow, and the great Benefits which our blessed Lord hath accordingly purchas'd with his Blood, would be in vain as to us, except the Holy Spirit make particular Application thereof to us. And this he doth by the saving Grace of *Faith* (as hath been observ'd before) *appropriating Faith*, by which all things communicable become a Believer's: he has thereupon an immediate Interest in them. It's under this Grace of Faith that all other Graces militate, as the Captain and Leader of them; it is that golden Link in the first Chain of Graces, to which all the rest are ty'd. It is this Grace of Faith which purifies the Heart, that works by Love, and produceth Gospel-Repentance; that overcomes the World, with all the enticing Blandishments and Allurements of it: and it is by this Grace we stand; hereby we have access to God, by Faith we are saved. Faith being the Grace which joins Christ and the Soul, and brings it into the Bond of an everlasting Covenant; it is that Grace therefore which a Believer should be (in an especial manner) frequent and continually in the acting and exercise of. *Our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*
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356 Of expresse Covenanting with God,

being the great Store-house and Sum of all Covenant-Blessings, Faith is the Hand that receives them all in him, by taking hold of that Covenant ratify'd in his Blood. For tho this Faith comes to Christ with an empty hand, as to any thing of its own; yet it fills the Soul, it makes us poor in our own sight and rich in Christ, thro that infinite Fulness that is in him; it strips the Sinner of the impure Rags of his own Righteousness, and clothes him anew with the white and spotless Robes of the Righteousness of Christ. It is the Merchant-Ship that brings Food from afar, that brings in continual Succours, Supports, Supplies, and abundant Satisfaction to the Soul: and it may be added, that all other Duties are Dross and Counterfeit, unless they come to God with the Stamp of this Grace of Faith in Christ upon them; for without Faith, it is impossible to please God. Now what is Believing, and the acting of this Grace of Faith, but a renew'd taking hold of the Covenant, and the believing Application of it to our selves? This is the proper Work of Faith; it hath two Hands, by one it receives Christ, and by the other it gives it self to him; and both these make an intire Faith. If either be wanting, the Soul is lame, and hath nothing to do with the Covenant or the Promises. Tho it be weak, yet if it be sincere, it will perform great things; tho it be as a Grain of Mustard-Seed, or a bruised Reed, it will be a strong Staff to support us in our Journey to Heaven. There's nothing therefore the Devil envieth and tempts God's Children so much about, as this Grace of Faith; and there's nothing so fit to quench his fiery Darts, as this Shield of Faith is: and yet there is not any Grace the sincere Believer is ready to doubt the truth of, or fears a defect in, so much as his Faith, and the exercise and acting of it.

How often doth the sincere Christian cry out with Tears, *Lord I believe, help thou my Unbelief!* Mar. 9. 24.

Now (as an eminent and worthy Divine Mr. Heywood " says) I am verily perswaded that a solemn in his Baptis- " personal covenanting with God, and mal Bonds re- " frequent renewing of that Covenant, new'd. " would be an effectual Cure of all these " Jealousies." For as a Christian's Relation to God is made up by this Grace of Faith, and his entering thereby into Covenant with him; so the frequent believing renewing

renewing of that Covenant, and a due Reflection upon our Sincerity in it, will give the Covenanter a comfortable prospect of his good Estate God-wards. For as Believing is our *taking hold* of the *Covenant of Grace*, so what is Covenanting but the first and the renew'd *Actings of Faith*? And the Frequency of these Acts both strengthen the Habit, and also evidence the Truth thereof. So that, as it hath been said, the Christian must repent till he know he repents, and love God till he know he loves him; so also he should believe and act this Grace of Faith, till he knows he doth believe. Many walk in Darkness and Disquietness, for want of understanding or considering the Terms of the New Covenant; or not conceiving what that Faith is, that contracts or carries on this Covenant-Relation. At those seasons of the Outgoings of thy Soul to God, and Breathings after Union with Christ, taking him as thy God, and devoting thyself afresh to him; what is this but Covenanting? And what can we call this, but the acting of Faith? They are *equivalent*: when our Desires are going out after the blessed Jesus, so that it is the matter of our greatest Joy when we find him, and we can account it our greatest Happiness when we can hold and continue the possession of him; then we are acting this Grace of Faith upon him: 1 *Pet.* 2. 7.

Now tho a true Believer that is thus in Covenant with him, may (to his apprehension) sometimes lose his blessed Lord, yet he will not lose him; this Covenant-Relation is so strongly maintain'd by the Lord of Life; 1 *Pet.* 1. 5. And therefore our business is, frequently to renew, as our Repentance, so also the Actings of Faith, and plighting our Troth again in renewing our Covenant with that God, who hath promis'd to *heal our Backslidings*, *Hos.* 14. 4. And tho he may withdraw his comforting, yea, his quickning Presence for a season; yet he will not cast off for ever, *Lam.* 3. 31. He thinks good to correct our Sins, and rouse us out of our Indifferency, Coldness, and Sloth; but he will *turn again, he will have compassion upon us*: so that the covenanted Christian (he that is once really in that Covenant) may say with *Bucer*, *Castiget fortiter, &c.* *Let him chasten severely, he will never, no he will never cast off.* *Mic.* 7. 19. Fear not therefore, Christian; thy Comforts may ebb and flow, but thy Covenant-State is

358 Of exprefs Covenanting with God,

fixed, and remains firm, thou needest not fear what *Devils* or *Men* can do; they can at most but kill the Body, and that will join thee faster to thy Head and Husband. Of how great a value is it in a losing day, to enjoy an unloseable Treasure? Did we but know what a God he is that is in Covenant with every true *Believer*, and the Portion of such; we should exult and triumph over all the Losses and Afflictions of the World, and be ravish'd with the Sense of his Favour, and the Sweetness of him, who is our God and our exceeding Joy.

Such a sincere *Closure with Christ*, as hath been before describ'd, is that wherein the Essence of Christianity lies, and which constitutes our Covenant-Interest in him. Herein we make choice of God for our Portion and Happiness; and when we have adventur'd and laid up our whole Interest and all our Hopes with him in Christ, casting our selves wholly upon the Merit of his Righteousness, and having thus understandingly and heartily resign'd and given up our selves to him, resolving in his strength to be for ever at his command and disposal: then we are indeed within this blessed Covenant of Grace, which stands firm to us. Having thus put our own Name into this Covenant-Grant, and being thus come sincerely into the Bond of the Covenant; we shall assuredly have our share in all the Blessings of the Covenant: *Jer. 30. 21, 22. Deut. 26. 17, 18.* The same day that they engag'd to keep the *Commandments of God*, the same day the Lord engages to keep his *Promise* with them.

There is a twofold Covenanting with God, in *Profession* and in *Reality*, by Persons adult; an entring our Names and engaging our Hearts: the former is done in *Baptism* by all that are baptiz'd, who by receiving the Seal of the Covenant are visibly and in Profession enter'd into it; and the latter is also *twofold*:

I. *Virtual* and *Implicit*; which is done by all those that have sincerely made that *Closure with God in Christ* before mention'd, having chosen the Lord, resign'd and given up themselves to him: all such are engag'd Persons, and have virtually covenanted with him. And hereby a Christian doth implicitly ingage himself afresh to God, and renew this Covenant-Obligation to him in every Duty and spiritual Performance; as in Prayer, Reading
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the Word, &c. he hereby professes his Relation to God as his Father, and Dedication to him as his Child, Servant, and Subject. And this must be seriously minded in all our Approaches to God.

II. But secondly, there is a *Formal* and *Explicit* Covenanting with God; an *express* and *professed* entering or renewing of our *baptismal* Covenant with God, whereby we bind our selves to the Lord *anew*, by solemn Vow or Promise, to stand to our Choice, according to that Engagement and Obligation that is before upon us. This may be only *inward* in the Soul, or *outward* and *express'd*, either by Words, subscribing the Hand, &c. And by how much the more *express* our solemn Covenanting with God is, by so much the more sensibly and strongly it is likely to hold our Hearts to him.

Now that which I would persuade you to, is this solemn *express* Covenanting, and frequent *Renewing* your Covenant with God; (and especially on your Fasting-days.) It is the Advice, and hath been the Practice of some eminent Christians and faithful Labourers in the Work of the Lord, about this matter; some of whom (and in particular the Reverend and Worthy Mr. *Joseph Allen*) have compos'd an excellent Form of Words (for the help of weaker Christians who chuse not to do it for themselves) which is aptly accommodated to all the Substantials of our *Baptismal* Covenant: And it having found great acceptance with many serious Christians, is very fitly recommended to the use not only of young Converts, but of the more grown Christians, that have not yet experimented this or the like Course, for the establishment of them in Holiness and Comfort.

And in order to this so solemn Transaction, it is advised,

I. To set apart some time to be spent in *secret* before the Lord.

1. In *seeking* earnestly his special *Assistance* and gracious *Acceptance* of you.

2. In considering distinctly all the *Terms* or *Conditions* of the *Covenant*, as they have been laid before you, and are also express'd in the Form hereafter propos'd.

3. In searching your *Hearts*, whether you either have already, or can now freely make such a Closure with God in Christ, according to the Tenour of your *Bap-*

360 *Of exprefs Covenanting with God,*

rifmal Covenant. In fpecial, confider what your Sins are, and examine whether you can refolve (thro the Strength of the Lord) to forgo them all; confider what the Laws of Chrift are, how holy, ftrict, and fpiritual; and whether you can, upon deliberation, make choice of them all (even thofe that do moft crofs your worldly Interests, your beloved Sins and corrupt Inclinations) as the *Rule* of your whole Life; and whether, however Corruption will be pulling back, yet the prevailing part of you will be for the Lord, and all his *holy ways*.

II. *Compoſe* your Spirits into the moſt *ſerious Frame* poſſible, ſuitable to a Tranſaction of ſo high importance.

III. *Lay hold* on the *Covenant* of God, and rely upon his *Promiſe* of giving Grace and Strength, whereby you may be enabled to perform your Promiſe. Trust not to your own Strength, to the Strength of your Vows and Reſolutions, but take hold on his Strength; *Iſa.* 56. 2, 4, 6. and reſolve therein to be faithful, and never to go back.

IV. Being thus prepar'd, and ſome convenient time ſet apart for this purpoſe, in the moſt ſolemn manner poſſible, as if the Lord were viſibly preſent before your eyes, fall down on your knees, and open your Hearts to him, in theſe or the like words.

O moſt dreadful God, for the Paſſion of thy Son I beſeech thee accept of thy poor *Prodigal*, now proſtrating himſelf at thy door. I have fallen from thee by my Iniquity, and am by Nature a Son of Death, and a thouſand-fold more a Child of Hell by my wicked Practice; but of thine infinite Grace thou haſt promiſ'd Mercy to me in Chriſt, if I will by Faith receive and embrace him, and turn to thee with all my heart. Therefore upon the Call of thy Goſpel I am now come in; and throwing down my Weapons, ſubmit my ſelf to thy Mercy.

And becauſe thou requireſt, as the Condition of my Peace with thee, that I ſhould put away my *Idols*, and be at defiance with all thine Enemies, which I acknowledg I have wickedly ſided with againſt thee: I here from the bottom of my Heart *re-nounce* them all; firmly covenanting with thee, thro thy Grace and Strength, not to *allow* my ſelf in any *known Sin*,

*The Term
from what we
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and frequent Renewing our Covenant. 361

Sin, but conscientiously to use all the Means that I know thou hast prescrib'd, for the death and utter destruction of all my Corruptions. And whereas I have formerly inordinately and idolatrously let out my Affections upon the World, I do here resign my *Heart* to thee that madest it; humbly protesting before thy glorious Majesty, that it is the firm Resolution of my Heart, and that I do unfeignedly desire Grace from thee; that when thou shalt call me hereunto, I may practise this my Resolution (thro thy assistance) to forsake all that is dear unto me in this World, rather than to turn from thee to the ways of Sin; and that I will watch against all its Temptations, whether of Prosperity or of Adversity, lest they should withdraw my Heart from thee: beseeching thee also to help me against the Temptations of Satan, to whose wicked Suggestions I resolve by thy Grace never to yield my self a Servant. And because my own *Righteousness* is but as *menstruous Rags*, I renounce all *Confidence* therein, and acknowledg that I am of my self a hopeless, helpless, undone Creature, without Righteousness or Strength.

And forasmuch as thou hast of thy bottomless Mercy offer'd most graciously to me a wretched Sinner, to be again my God thro Christ, if I would accept of thee; I call Heaven and Earth to record this day, that I do here solemnly avouch thee for the Lord my God: and with all possible Veneration, bowing the Neck of my Soul under the feet of thy most sacred Majesty, I do here take thee the Lord *Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, for my Portion and chief Good; and do give up my self, Body and Soul, for thy Servant, promising and vowing to serve thee in *Holiness and Righteousness all the days of my Life*.

The Term to which we must turn.

And since thou hast appointed the Lord Jesus Christ the only means of coming unto thee, I do here, upon the bended Knees of my Soul, accept of him, as the only new and living way by which Sinners may have access to thee, and do here solemnly join my self in a Marriage-Covenant to him.

O blessed Jesus, I come to thee hungry and hardly bestead, poor and wretched, and miserable, and blind, and naked; a most loathsome polluted Wretch, a guilty

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362 *Of exprefs Covenanting with God,*

condemn'd Malefactor, unworthy for ever to wash the Feet of the Servants of my Lord ; much more, to be solemnly marry'd to the King of Glory : but since such is thy unparallel'd Love, I do here with all my power accept thee, and do take thee for my Head and Husband, to love, and honour, and obey thee before all others ; and this, to the death. I embrace thee in all thy Offices, I renounce my own Worthiness, and do here avow thee to be the Lord my Righteousness ; I renounce my own Wisdom, and do here take thee for my only Guide ; I renounce my own Will, and take thy Will for my Law.

And since thou hast told me, that I must suffer if I will reign, I do here covenant with thee to take my Lot as it falls with thee, and by thy Grace assisting, to run all hazards with thee ; verily supposing, that neither Life nor Death shall part between me and thee.

And because thou hast been pleas'd to give me thy holy Laws, as the Rule of my Life, and the Way in which I should walk to thy Kingdom ; I do here willingly put my neck under thy Yoke, and set my shoulder to thy Burden : and subscribing to all thy Laws, as holy, just, and good, I solemnly take them as the Rule of my Words, Thoughts, and Actions ; promising, that tho my Flesh contradict and rebel, yet I will endeavour to order and govern my whole Life according to thy Direction, and will not allow myself in the neglect of any thing that I know to be my Duty.

Only because thro the Frailty of my Flesh I am subject to many Failings, I am bold humbly to protest, that unallow'd Miscarriages, contrary to the settled Bent and Resolution of my Heart, shall not make void this Covenant ; for so thou hast said.

Now, Almighty God, Searcher of Hearts, thou knowest that I make this Covenant with thee this day, without any known *Guile* or *Reservation* ; beseeching thee, that if thou espieest any Flaw or Falshood therein, thou wouldst discover it to me, and help me to do it aright.

And now, Glory be to thee, O God the Father, whom I shall be bold from this day forward to look upon as my God and Father, that ever thou shouldest find out such a way for the Recovery of undone *Sinners* !
Glory be to thee, O God the Son, who hast loved me,
and

and frequent Renewing our Covenant. 363

and wash'd me from my Sins in thine own Blood, and art now become my Saviour and Redeemer! Glory be to thee, O God the Holy Ghost, who by the Finger of thine Almighty Power hast turn'd about my Heart from Sin to God!

O dreadful *Jehovah*, the Lord God Omnipotent, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, thou art now become my Covenant-Friend, and I thro thy infinite Grace am become thy Covenant-Servant. *Amen.* And the Covenant which I have made on Earth, let it be ratify'd in Heaven.

When this is done, and you have subscrib'd your Hand thereto, and with all possible Reverence spread the Writing before the Lord, keep it as a *Memorial* of the solemn Transactions that have pass'd between God and you, that you may have recourse to it in Doubts and Temptations: when you are once sincerely in Covenant, you have a God that you may call your own, to whom you may have free access, with whom you may be sure to find *Grace to help in all times of need.* Being united to Christ, you have the Blessing of Communion with him; whatsoever is Christ's, is now become yours; his Prayers, his Tears, his Obedience, his Blood, his Spirit, the Believer in Covenant may say of them, *All are mine, because he is mine.* Your Sufferings, your Sins, your Debts, your Wants, are all upon your Husband. God deals with Christ, and all that are indeed in Covenant with him, as one and the same Party: In Christ's being justify'd, your Justification is secur'd; in Christ's Resurrection, your Resurrection; in Christ's Glorification, your Glorification is secur'd for ever: *Because I live, ye shall live also,* John 14. 19. This is the Portion, the Inheritance of all God's covenanting Servants: Christ is your Saviour, and that good Work is then begun, which he will assuredly perform and accomplish in and for all that are his real Members.

The next special Duty that you are to be directed in, is the *Renewing of your Covenant*, and the *Dedication* of your selves to God. This Covenant needs to be *renew'd*, partly because of our frequent Breaches; 'tis not a work that must be once done and no more, but often. Before the Directions which are to be given therefore concerning this Duty, I shall premise,

364 *Of exprefs Covenanting with God,*

1. That Christians are guilty of much Treachery and false Dealing with God. We have Hearts that love to wander, and therefore need Tye upon Tye, and to be often *renewing* the Oath of our *Allegiance* unto God; that we may give our blessed Lord a new and hearty Welcome into our Souls. We are apt to break with him *daily*, and the Lord may take up that Complaint against many of us, which he took up against *Israel*, Psal. 78. 36, 37. We are baptiz'd but once, but we receive the Lord's Supper often, to make the Bond of our Duty more strong, and to tie it the faster upon our Souls. There is a double Falseness in our Covenanting, which we may be guilty of.

(1.) In our *entering into Covenant*: when we do it not heartily, but feignedly; when our Promises therein are made without a real Intention and Purpose of performing what our Mouths have utter'd: and this is lying unto God. It's said of some, *They lyed to him with their Tongues*: and it's to be fear'd there are many such to be found among those that are call'd Christians; who have (as we all have done) covenanted to renounce the *World* and the Love of it; to renounce the *Flesh*, and the Lusts of it; and to renounce the *Devil* and his Works: We have all covenanted to take the Lord to be our God, to cleave to him, to obey and serve him only all our days. All this we have done in our *Baptism*, and in our Profession that we have since made to stand to our baptismal Covenant: but how many have too evidently ly'd unto the Lord herein, and dealt falsely in his Covenant? who being false in this Foundation of their Christianity, shew themselves not to be real Christians. But,

(2.) There is a Falshood in our *keeping Covenant*; when whatever Reality there hath been in our *Intention*, yet we fail in our *Performance*; when we are not *stedfast* in our *Covenant*, and every part thereof. And thus every Christian is more or less guilty; every Sin we commit, is in a degree a breaking Covenant, a departing and going back from the Lord, and a dealing *treacherously* with the Most High. And how much Falshood, alas! of this kind, is there to be found in every one of us, when some of our Hearts are so set upon the World, and take so much liberty in pursuing, and so much pleasure in the enjoying of these earthly things, as that the

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Lord is the less regarded and looked after ! Is this according to our Covenant ? When there is such Fleshliness and Sensuality to be found amongst others ; when we live such idle, easy, careless Lives ; when our Appetites, our Passions, our Tongues are left so much at their liberty ; when there is so much provision made for the Flesh, and so little for the Soul : is this according to our Covenant, and what we meant when we promis'd to be Christians ? Is this our living to God, and unto Christ ? O what Falshood therefore have we been guilty of ! which is to be consider'd and laid to heart. And,

2. That all our *Breaches* of Covenant do exceedingly weaken the *Bond* and *Obligation* of the Covenant. It may be weaken'd in a double sense,

1st, *Really* ; when the Tye of it is relax'd and loosened, and we cease to be so strongly bound as before : but thus no Sin can weaken our Covenant Obligation ; it doth not become ever the less our Duty to cleave unto God, for that we have so often departed from him ; or ever the less our Sin to follow the World, because we have follow'd it so long. Our Sins in this sense do rather add to the Obligation ; by how much the less we have paid of our Debt, by so much the more there is behind : our former Neglects oblige us to the greater care for the future.

2^{dly}, *Sensibly* ; when the Bond of the Covenant being so often broken, is not accounted so solemn or so sacred as before. It seems but a very light thing to Persons that have so often and ordinarily broken their Faith with God, to break it over and over again ; and it doth not much affect or trouble such Hearts, having been accusom'd to transgress, to revolt more and more. Thus when Sin can plead Prescription, it grows bold, and not so easily restrain'd.

3. The *renewing* of our Covenant, will revive the Obligation of it ; tho there be not a *stricter*, yet there is *another* Tye : Men are more afraid and asham'd to break their Word, as soon as it is gone forth out of their mouths. The Seriousness wherewith such a sacred Duty should every time be perform'd, will leave some Impressions upon the Heart : the very considering over our Covenant-Breaches, which is necessary to our renewing of it, will tend to awaken our Hearts to greater Care and Watchfulness.

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366 Of exprefs Covenanting with God,

These things being premis'd, let this double Direction be observ'd for the Performance of this Duty of *renewing our Covenant*.

I. For the Time *when*. And,

II. For the Manner *how*.

Touching the former, there are some special *Times*, when this Duty is especially seasonable. As,

1. Upon our *Falls* into any greater Sins. These make great Breaches, and 'tis not safe to let them lie unmade up. Such breaking of Covenant makes a Breach upon Conscience; and this will prove as the breaking down the Banks of the Sea, which if they be not presently made up, there may be no stopping of them.

2. In great *Straits* and *Afflictions*. We have then our Hearts at the advantage, to bring them back, or to bind them the faster to the Lord, when we stand in any special need of Comfort, or Help from God. *Gen. 28. 20, 21.* when *Jacob* fled from his Father's House, for fear of his Brother *Esau*, he vow'd, *If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on, so that I come again to my Father's House in peace; then shall the Lord be my God.* Times of *Straits* and *Difficulties* are special Seasons for this Duty: tho it be too ordinary that those *Vows* which we make in the days of our Distress, are forgotten in the days of our Prosperity; yet it is not always so, and therefore that is a proper season for this Duty.

3. In case of any *Declinings* to a careless, remiss, and senseless Frame of Heart or Life.

4. At our Approaches to the *Table of the Lord*. These are some of the special *Times* for the Performance of this Duty of *Renewing our Covenant*, and making a fresh Surrender of our selves to the Lord.

II. For the Manner *how*.

1. Remember your *Covenant*, read over and consider distinctly the Terms of it, and weigh diligently the Strictness and great Solemnity of your engaging to God therein, that your Hearts may be the more deeply affected therewith.

2. Remember your *Faults* and *Transgressions*; read over, and consider distinctly the Sins you have fallen into, since your engaging to the Lord, together with

and frequent Renewing our Covenant. 367

the several *Aggravations* of them; and repent and be humbled under them: *Isa. 5. 4, 5.*

3. Especially consider how your Hearts have stood towards the Lord in the main; whether your Falls have not been such as give you occasion to suspect that you were not upright in your first engaging. Consider whether such a Life as you have led since, such Sins as you have been overcome by since, are consistent with Sincerity.

4. Resolve upon more *Care, Watchfulness, and Faithfulness* for the future. Verbal Promises, tho there appear some Affection at the time, if they be not join'd with a sincere Purpose and Resolution (thro Grace) to take more care; are like to come to nothing.

5. Have a special eye, in your engaging to the Lord, at your special Sins, Failings, and Neglects, that you have found your selves more inclin'd to, and more ordinarily overtaken by. I will thro the Help of God watch against every Sin, but especially against *Pride, Passion, Covetousness, Lying, &c.* This is my Sin, herein I am apt to be faulty, here my hardest work lies; I will watch to every Duty, but especially to *Temperance, Patience, Self-denial, &c.* herein I have been most wanting.

6. Lay hold on the *Covenant or Promise of God*, for the renewing of his Grace towards you, for the renewing of your Strength, whereby you may be more enabled to perform your Promises, and pay your Vows. It may be your former Experiences of your unfaithful Hearts, have quite discourag'd you. I have found this Heart of mine so fickle, and so false, and so feeble, that I dare not trust it so far as to engage any farther for it. I have found my Work so hard, my Lusts so strong, my Temptations so many, my Strength so small, and my Attempts hitherto to follow the Lord have been so successless; that I am afraid I shall but mock God, and bring more Guilt upon my self, by adventuring to promise any thing farther for this sinful, infirm, and unfaithful Heart. Why, tho you dare not trust your Heart, yet trust your God; who hath said, That he will put his Fear into you, that you shall not depart from him; that he will renew your Strength, and that his Grace is sufficient for you. Depend upon God for the renewing of your Strength, and then fear not to renew your Vows.

7. In this Strength of the Lord go into his Presence; and with Sorrow in your Heart and Shame for such *Unfaithfulness*, falling down before him, humbly confess and acknowledg your *Falls* and *Failings*; and then in the like solemn manner, as hath been before directed, engage your self again to the Lord in the same *Covenant*.

C H A P. X.

Of the Lord's Supper.

IT is God alone, who is the Lord of all things, and the only Law-giver, who hath authority to appoint *Sacraments* in the Church; which are outward and visible Rites instituted by him, to signify the *Benefits* of Christ's Death and Passion, and to *seal* and *confirm* the *Promises* of Salvation to those who take care faithfully to form the Conditions requir'd of them. Now,

Those Sacraments that were of divine Appointment to the *Jews* under the Old-Testament Dispensation, were *Circumcision* and the *Passover*; which were bloody Sacraments, pointing out thereby the Blood of Christ, which then was to be shed: to which now answer the Institutions of our blessed Lord under the New-Testament Dispensation, *viz.* *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*; which Sacraments are now unbloody, his precious Blood being now shed. And as the Sacrament of *Baptism* came in the room of *Circumcision* (which was of divine Appointment under the Law) so likewise that of the *Lord's Supper* succeeded the *Passover*: both which are now the standing *Sacraments* of the Gospel-Church, of which Christ himself is the Author and Institutor; who as King and Sovereign of his Church, appoints therein his Officers, Laws and Ordinances, which none else have any power to do. He is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and is invested with Authority therefore to appoint the Tokens and Seals of it.

Now in order to the treating more distinctly and plainly concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, it will be requisite to speak something, first, concerning the

the primitive Institution of the *Jewish* Passover in *Egypt*, and those things that were proper to it; and then shew how they prefigur'd Christ our Passover, who was himself sacrific'd for us.

The first Institution of the Passover, we find in *Exod.* 12. When *Israel* after long Servitude and Bondage was to go out of *Egypt*; God commanded them in their several Families to kill a *Lamb*; to roast it whole, to eat it within doors that night; to sprinkle the Side and upper Door-Posts with the *Blood* thereof; whereby they were safe from the destroying Angel; that was that night to destroy the First-born of all the *Egyptians*; but was to pass by all the Houses of *Israel* that were sprinkled with *Blood*. Herein our blessed Saviour was plainly pointed out and prefigur'd.

1. They were commanded to take a *Lamb*; a Lamb the Emblem of Innocency: so our Saviour was stiled, *John* 1. 23. *The Lamb of God*; being of a Lamb-like Meekness.

2. A *Lamb without Blemish*; so was our blessed Lord and Saviour, *1 Pet.* 1. 19.

3. One of their own *Flocks and Folds*; so Christ was of the *Jewish* Nation. He took our Nature upon him, and was in all things like to his Brethren, Sin only excepted; *Rom.* 9. 5.

4. It must be slain; so Christ was put to death on the Cross.

5. Not a Bone of it must be broken; which was verifi'd in Christ, *John* 19. 33, 36.

6. It must be roasted; so our Saviour suffer'd the scorching Heat of his Father's Wrath, sweating Drops of *Blood* for our sakes, *Luke* 22. 44. O Sinner, how little art thou sensible of what thy Saviour hath suffer'd to redeem thee!

7. The *Blood* of the Lamb must be sprinkled on the Side and upper Door-Posts of their Houses, that they might be preserv'd from the destroying Angel; so must the *Blood* of Christ be sprinkled by Faith on our Hearts and Consciencess; that we may be deliver'd from the Wrath to come.

8. They were to eat the Paschal Lamb with bitter Herbs and unleavened Bread; with bitter Herbs, to mind them of the Afflictions and Bondage they were in in

Egypt: so we must have Contrition and Remorse wrought in us for our Sins, and be in Bitterness of Soul for Sin, while here in the World, or we cannot reasonably expect Relief by Christ. 2. *With unleavened Bread*: before they eat the Passover, they were to cleanse their Household-stuff, their Vessels, and Utenfils, from all *leavened Bread*, that none might be found in them, or cleave unto them. Before we eat the *Lord's Supper*, we must cleanse our Hearts and Lives from all known Sin, that we allow not our selves in any sinful way; we may come to this Ordinance with many Sins bewail'd, striving against and groaning under them, but not with one allow'd or approv'd of.

2dly, They were so strict in their Search about it, that they might rid their Houses of all *Leaven*, that they sought with Candles to see if there were any remaining in any Corner, Chink, or Hole in the House. The Parallel of which is, a closer Examination of our *Consciences* by the Light of God's Word; looking into every Room and Corner of our Hearts, lest there should be any Sin lurking in our Souls, and remaining undiscover'd in our Understandings, Will, or Affections; in our Love, Joy, Delight, &c.

3dly, Having found the Reliques and Fragments of *leavened Bread*, they cast it out of their sight, that they might not only not use it, but might not look towards it, or would burn it till it was consum'd. Thus should we cast away our Sins, when by diligent Search we have found them out; we must not indulge any Sin, but forsake and destroy it, and never more hanker after it.

4thly, Lest after all their Diligence, any *Leaven* should remain with them unfound out, they pass'd a solemn Execration upon it, in these or the like words: All the *Leaven* that is within my possession, whether seen by me or not seen, cleansed by me or not cleansed, let it be *nothing*, and esteem'd by me as *nothing*, be it *accursed*; as the Dust of the Earth, let it be scatter'd and destroy'd. Thus should we disown every Sin, seen or not seen, after this manner: Lord, if there be any Sin in me, which after all my searching of my Heart I have not found out, let it be *accursed*, let it be as *nothing*, and *destroy'd* in me; tho I could not find it out so as to deal severely with it, not because I love it, but because I could not find it.

The

The Apostle shews that by *Leaven* is meant *Malice* and *Wickedness*; and by *unleavened Bread*, *Sincerity* and *Truth*. He intimates what manner of Persons they must be, that intend to feed upon Christ by Faith. They must not think to eat of this *Lamb*, except they rid themselves of their *Leaven*. *Leaven* swells the Mass, and sours it; *Pride* makes the Heart swell, and *Malice* sours it. Search therefore to find out thy *Leaven*, when thou thinkest of approaching this holy Table. Let us search every Corner of our Hearts, as with a Candle; and when we have found out our Sins, manifest our Hatred and Loathing of them; looking for Pardon only upon our real forsaking and parting with them: we must not expect *Salvation* without *Sanctification*.

9. They were to eat it with their *Loins girt*, and *Staves in their hands*, and *Shoes on their feet*; shewing themselves thereby to be in a posture of Readiness to be gone out of *Egypt*, and to seek the promis'd Land: which may intimate to us, that we must receive this blessed Sacrament, with intention to leave the Dominion of *Pharaoh*, the Kingdom, Service, and Bondage of *Sin* and *Satan*, and to march on towards our heavenly *Cannan*. However pleasing our Sins may appear, they must be left; we must turn our back on them, and forsake them for ever: there's no coming to *Canaan*, except we leave *Egypt*.

10. When they had eaten of the roasted Lamb, if any thing thereof remain'd, it was to be *burnt*, and not *left till the Morning*. This may shew us, that Sacramental Elements are not Sacramental, but in their Use only, and no longer.

11. Two sorts of Persons Were barred from eating the Passover:

(1.) The *Uncircumcised*, the *Stranger* and *Foreigner*, *Exod. 12. 43, 48*. Such as are not initiated into Christ's Family, the Church, by the first Sacrament of *Baptism*, cannot regularly be admitted to the Lord's Table.

(2.) *Unclean Persons* (tho circumcis'd) or such as were in a Journey, were to be put off to the second Month, being not cleansed for the present, according to the *Purification of the Sanctuary*, *2 Chron. 30. 18, 19*. *Numb. 9. 10, 11*. This shews us, that some Persons, tho they are within the Communion of the Church, may be unfit at

some particular times to come to the Lord's Table, and therefore should forbear for the present.

12. After the *Paschal Lamb* was eaten, begun the Feast of the Passover, or of unleavened Bread, which continu'd *seven Days*; and in that time, no leavened Bread was to be eaten, *Exod. 12. 15, 16.* The Apostle alludes hereunto, *1 Cor. 5. 7. Christ our Passover is sacrificed, therefore let us keep the Feast.* As if he should have said, those for whom *Christ our Passover* is sacrificed, on whose Consciences his Blood is sprinkled, ought to be a holy People, not leavened with Sin and Wickedness, and to walk before the Lord in Sincerity and Truth, living all their days in a holy Rejoicing and Thanksgiving.

Having spoken thus much of the *Passover*, and the Rites belonging to it; I come now to speak of the *Lord's Supper*, which succeeds it: Our blessed Lord Christ himself being the Author and Instituter of it, in eating the *Paschal Supper* with his Disciples (who were *Jews*) took some of the *Paschal Cheer* and Provisions, and made them the Materials of this blessed Sacrament; according to that Authority which he has reserv'd to himself (as was before mention'd) as King and Lord of his Church.

The Time of its Institution was the same night in which he was betray'd, so near the time of his Death, and what he knew was then to be done and suffer'd by him; wherein was evidenc'd the Greatness of his dying Love, who, whilst so full of Sorrow, was making provision still for our Comfort, and for the maintaining of his Peoples *spiritual Life*, when his own *Death* was now so near approaching.

The external Elements and Signs are *Bread* and *Wine*, by which inward Mysteries and spiritual Blessings are signify'd. Here Christ is represented to us as sacrificed for us, and delivering himself to us, with the Fruits and Benefits of his Death, for our eternal Good. In Sacraments there is something seen, and something understood; something perceiv'd by *Sense*, and something also to be apprehended by *Faith*; that by these visible Signs, we might perceive and call to mind sublime and invisible things. Here is Bread, even Bread of Life, to fill the hungry Soul, and Wine to satisfy the thirsty, and to cheer the drooping Soul. The Body of Christ that was
nailed

nailed to the Cross, and his Blood that was shed, was a *Sacrifice* as then offer'd up to God for us; but it is *Meat* and *Drink*, as offer'd now to us: *John 6, 53.* He was given for us in the Sacrifice, and is given to us in the Sacrament, with all the blessed Fruits and Benefits that flow from his Death and Sufferings on our account.

Herein our blessed Lord himself is both the Giver and the Gift; and what he hath in so much love provided, and bestows, Believers certainly with the greatest Joy and Thankfulness should receive; feeding on him by Faith, and drinking his Blood, in order to their spiritual Nourishment and Growth in Grace. *This is my Body: This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood.* The Bread was not turn'd into Christ's real Body, nor the Wine into his Blood. Did the Disciples eat his real Body, when he was with them at the Table? or did they drink his real Blood, which then was in his Veins and in his Body, and not in the Cup? And did they not at the same time see, and taste, and handle Bread, which was really so? It was impossible a finite Body should be both in Heaven and on Earth, and in so many places at once, as the Sacrament might be administred in, at the same time: but the meaning is, This is a *Sign* of my Body, and a *Sign* of my Blood, sacramentally such, the Communion of both; as the Cup in the Sacrament is said to be the *New Testament* or *Covenant*; it is not the very *Covenant*, but the *Sign* and *Seal* thereof. And Christ declaring who they are that this and the things signify'd do belong unto, in these words [*which is broken for you*] it is according to the mind of Christ, that Believers in the Lord's Supper should make particular Application of himself, and of the Fruits of his Death and Sufferings to themselves. A true Believer may take the Bread, and say, The Lord Jesus died for me; and the Wine, and say, Christ Jesus shed his Blood for me.

And then we have a *Command* for the observing of this Ordinance, together with the *Frequency*, *Ends*, and *Continuance* of it. *Do this in remembrance of me, and as oft as ye do it, &c.* which Command is not to be extended so much to Circumstances and Accessaries, as to the substance and main of the Institution, the End and Intent thereof, which we must have our eye chiefly upon. The dying Charge of a Friend does usually make great

impression on the By-standers; and so should this solemn Charge of our dying Saviour make upon us: *Do this in remembrance of me*, and observe it in all Ages till I come. The Lord will come, and till then this Sacrament must continue; but when he comes to take us to himself, we shall need this and other Ordinances no more; when the *End* is attain'd, the *Means* shall cease. But as the Sacraments of the Old Testament did continue till Christ's first Coming, in the *Flesh*; so the Sacraments of the New Testament shall continue till Christ's second Coming, in *Glory*.

Let us, in the next place, consider more particularly the Ends for which this Sacrament was instituted; which are these:

1. To be a solemn *Commemoration* of the Death and Passion of our Lord and Saviour, to keep it in *Remembrance*, and in the eye of the Church, till he come to Judgment: 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

2. To be a *Seal* of the *New Covenant*, or New Testament, with all the Promises and Privileges of it, and of the Ratification of it by the Blood of Christ. Luke 22. 20. *This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood*, that is, a Sign and Seal of the New Testament or Covenant, which is to be confirm'd and ratify'd by my Blood. Mat. 26. 28. *This is my Blood of the New Testament, which is now to be shed for many, for the Remission of Sins*: i.e. This Wine in the Cup is a Sign or Representation of my Blood, and a Seal whereby the New Covenant is confirm'd, with all the Promises of it. For *without shedding of Blood there is no Remission*: by this only the Justice of God could be satisfy'd.

It is a Seal of the Covenant to *true Believers*, and therefore a *conditional* Seal only in reference to us. If we are sincere and faithful in performing the Terms and Conditions of the Covenant of Grace, it then exhibits and confers the Blessings promis'd and contain'd in it.

3. It was appointed to be a means to stir up, excite, and increase *Repentance, Faith, Love, Hope, Joy, and Thankfulness*, in Believers, by a lively Representation of the Evil of Sin, the infinite Love of God in Christ, the Firmness of the Covenant of Grace, and the Greatness and Sureness of the Mercies promis'd. And,

4. To be a Badg and Cognizance of the Church before the World, and a Token that we solemnly profess and that we own a *crucified Jesus* for our Saviour; and that 'tis Christ and his Death that we *depend* upon and *abide* by, for the Remission of all our Sins, and Reconciliation with God.

5. To be a Means of our *renewing* our Covenant with God. Covenants in the Scripture were wont to be made by eating and drinking together. *Isaac* and *Abimelech*, *Jacob* and *Laban* concluded their Covenants with a Feast, *Gen. 26. 30. & Chap. 31. 44, 46.* Hereby we have an advantage of entering into a stricter Engagement to God, and renewing the Covenant we made at first with him in our *Baptism*, and which we have since occasionally renew'd, and so solemnly at his *Table*.

6. To be a means of procuring and advancing *Unity and Love* among the Saints and Servants of God. It is a *Feast of Love*, being a remembrance of the greatest Love that ever was manifested, *viz. of Christ's dying Love.* 'Tis a Feast upon Christ's *Sacrifice* of himself, which he offer'd for us; and should be a Means not only of uniting Believers more firmly to Christ their Head, but of uniting and endearing them more *one to another*; which the antient Christians express'd by *Agape*, or *Love-Feasts*, *Jude 12.* by their *Kiss of Charity*, *Rom. 16. 16. 1 Cor. 16. 30.* and by Collections for the Poor made at these times, *1 Cor. 16. 1.*

But now in order to the avoiding some dangerously mistaken Ends of this Ordinance, I shall only mention these few things farther to be a Caution against them; particularly,

1. This Sacrament was not appointed (as is before-mention'd) to turn Bread and Wine into the true and real Body and Blood of Christ (as the Papists affirm) for if Sense be not to be believ'd concerning its own Object, which tells all Men that it is still *Bread and Wine*, how can we believe that Christ, or any of his Apostles, were ever in the World, seeing they that saw them and convers'd with them, may on this ground, for all that, be deceiv'd? which were very irrational to imagine: And the Apostle expressly calls it *Bread* three times in three Verses together, and that *after the Consecration*, *1 Cor. 11. 26, 27, 28.* and says, it is not to make the Lord's Bo-

dy corporally present, but to shew, that is, to be a visible Representation and Commemoration of the Lord's Death, till he come to Judgment. Christ is indeed really present in this Sacrament; but not in the Elements, but to the Faith of the worthy Receiver.

2. This Sacrament was not appointed to sacrifice Christ again to the Father, to propitiate him for the Quick and Dead: for Christ having dy'd once, dieth no more; but by once offering up himself, hath for ever perfected them that are sanctify'd. Nor,

3. Is it a Means to convey Grace merely by the Work done, or by the outward receiving of it only (as Charns are suppos'd to work;) nor are we to suppose that God will pardon, or save any for their mere coming to this Ordinance, tho' they strive not with their Hearts to bring them to true Repentance, Faith in Christ, sincere Love to God and Men, and new Obedience.

4. It's not appointed as a Means to wipe off the old Score of Sin, that Men may more freely and boldly encourage themselves to sin again (as some ignorant People are apt to think,) but as a blessed means to mortify Sin in us, and to engage us unto Holiness.

Now therefore in order to our worthy partaking of the Lord's Supper, and that we may receive it in a right manner;

I. There are some Duties antecedent, to be perform'd before we approach to it.

II. Some Duties in the time of receiving it.

III. Some Duties after our receiving it.

I. For the Duties before we come to the Lord's Table, tho' they are many, yet they may be all brought under this head of Examination, to which we are exhorted by the Apostle; 1 Cor. 11. 28. *But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* The word *δοκιμαζέτω* signifieth a diligent and narrow Search into the Nature and Properties of a thing that is the Object thereof, as a Goldsmith proves the Goodness of his Metal; and it is urg'd and press'd upon us with greater Severity than any Precept besides. For, saith the Apostle, he that thro' a neglect of this Duty of Examination, *eateth and drinketh unworthily, (1.) He is guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ, ver. 27. (2.) He eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, ver. 29.* And as Hypocrites

erites and Unbelievers; while they eat and drink unworthily, eat and drink Damnation to themselves; if they repent not; so also such as are faithful and sincere Christians, when they, thro Infirmity and Negligence, do partake of this Ordinance unworthily, incur thereby temporal Judgments, as Sickness, Weakness, and sometimes Death it self: For, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. x. 21. speaking of the believing *Corinthians*, who had not prepar'd themselves as they should to this Ordinance, *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep, or die; because they receiv'd unworthily, irreverently, without any Preparation or Examination of themselves.* Indeed the best Men cannot be said in themselves to be *worthy* to partake of this Ordinance; and therefore if thou be a believing Christian, and dost sincerely endeavour to receive it in that manner, and with such Affections as the Lord doth require of thee, thou may'st be said (how unworthy soever thou art otherwise) to be a worthy Receiver.

That you may therefore be duly prepar'd for this sacred and solemn Ordinance, set apart some time, wherein you may,

(1.) Betake your self to some retir'd Privacy; and being sequestred from worldly Cares and Business, labour to bring your Heart into a serious Frame and Fiteness for this great Work.

(2.) Beg earnestly of the Lord the Assistance of his *Holy Spirit*, to discover the State of your Soul unto you, and to direct and enable you to prepare your self for this solemn Ordinance. And,

(3.) When Time, and Opportunity, and other Circumstances will admit, it may be advisable to set apart some time before for *Fasting* and *Humiliation*, in order thereto; which Duty is treated on under that Head, Chap. 8. to which I refer you.

Having shew'd before the Necessity of *Examination*, we come now to the Extent thereof, which may be brought to two Heads, viz.

1st. Of our *Graces*.

2^d. Of our *Sins*.

We must examine our selves of our *Graces*, more especially of our *Knowledge, Faith, Repentance, Love, and*

new Obedience, which are requir'd of every worthy Communicant.

I. *Knowledge* of the fundamental Principles and Grounds, of *Christianity*, and the Nature, Signification and Use of this *Sacrament*, must be known by every one that would be a *worthy Receiver*; that it was ordain'd by Christ himself, as a Memorial of his great Love, in offering up his Life a *Sacrifice* for our Sins; and that this, as well as the Sacrament of *Baptism*, is a Seal of *God's Covenant*, whereby he binds himself to perform his Promises made unto us in Christ, for strengthening our Faith therein: that by the outward Signs of Bread and Wine, are set forth the Body and Blood of Christ, which the worthy Receivers, by Faith, do partake of in this Sacrament; that *he that eats and drinketh unworthily, is guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ*; and that every one is to examine himself, *lest he eat and drink Judgment to himself*. Ignorant Persons therefore are totally unfit for the present, and must first be instructed, before they be admitted to this solemn and holy Ordinance. But by the Knowledge requir'd, is not to be understood (as was hinted before) the profound Knowledge of a Scholar, but the *savoury Knowledge* of a Christian, that affects the Heart, and works upon the Affections; 'tis such a Knowledge of God, as causes the Heart to fear him, such a Knowledge of Sin, as works in the Heart a Hatred and Loathing of it.

II. *Faith* in Christ. This is a main Qualification requisite to a Communicant. The main Acts of Faith are these two: (1.) A serious owning and acknowledging Christ for the only Saviour of the World. (2.) A sincere giving up of the Soul to him, to be pardon'd in his Blood, and sanctify'd by his Spirit, and a solemn trusting and depending on him for all the Benefits purchas'd by his Death and Passion; and such a Faith as this is operative for the purifying the Heart, and reforming the Life.

III. *Repentance*. They that are truly penitent, have wrought in them, by the Spirit of God, (1.) A Conviction of the Evil and Danger of their Sins. (2.) True Contrition and Godly Sorrow for them. (3.) A Hatred and Loathing of them. (4.) They are brought humbly to confess them with Shame and Sorrow to the Lord.

Lord. And, (5.) To turn from them unto him by a sincere Amendment, and Reformation of their Lives.

IV. *Love.* Of this Grace there are several Acts requir'd. (1.) We ought to excite a great Love in our Souls to God, as our Creator, Preserver and constant Benefactor, who sent his Son to redeem us. (2.) We ought to excite and stir up in our Souls a great Love to the Lord Jesus Christ, who humbled himself to the Death for us: In contemplation of which transcendent Love of Christ, the Apostle cries out, *If any Man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha*; 1 Cor. 16. 22. We ought also to have in our Hearts a true Love and Charity to all Christians: We should excite in our Souls a true Love to all those that are real Members of Christ: We should love their Persons, Graces and Fellowship. These we should love with a complacential Love. But besides these, we should love our very Enemies with a Love of Benevolence, wishing well unfeignedly to them, and praying for them. The proper Offices and Effects of this Charity are: (1.) Forgiving Injuries. (2.) Doing Good against Evil. (3.) Speaking Good of others (if we can honestly) or else abstaining from speaking Evil. Let us consider what the Apostle saith, 1 John 2. 9. *He that saith he is in the Light, and hateth his Brother, is in Darkness even until now: He that loveth his Brother, abideth in the Light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him; he that hateth his Brother, is a Murderer.* So that there is a kind of Heart-Murder and Tongue-Murder, which we ought to take heed of, as well as the Murder of the Hand.

V. *A Willingness to forsake all known Sin,* and an earnest Desire not only of the Pardon of all our Sins, thro the Blood of Christ, but of new Supplies of Grace from Christ, to enable us to reform what is amiss in our selves, and to walk more circumspectly and faithfully for the time to come. These are the great Requisites of Christianity, the things necessary to the constituting of a Christian.

Let every one therefore seriously examine himself, whether he finds these things in himself. But in order to a more clear discerning of our spiritual Estate, that we may not be mistaken in a matter of so great Importance, let us put these following Questions farther to our selves,

selves, and give in our Answer seriously and solemnly, as in the presence of that God, that searches the Heart, and knows our State; and let our Consciences make reply, as we would do if we were now to die.

1. Have I by the Grace of God been spiritually enlightened to see the Depravation of my Nature, and the Sinfulness of my Heart and Life? *Rom. 7. 14.*

2. Have I been truly sensible of the exceeding Evil of Sin? and had my Heart touched and affected with godly Sorrow and true Remorse upon the account of it? so much as to make me loath it, and unfeignedly willing to leave and forsake it? Doth it make me cry out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Death?* That I could (sometimes at least) desire to be loosed from this Body of Flesh, that I might be freed from the Body of Sin? *Rom. 7. 15—19, 23, 24.*

3. Have I been brought to see my absolute Need of Christ? Have I ever seen such Excellency and Beauty in him, that he is most lovely in my esteem? Have I tasted such Sweetness in Christ, in a Promise, or in Communion with God, that Christ is now truly precious in my account, that my Desire is after him, that I do sincerely and heartily chuse him, and embrace the Promises, and prefer Communion with God in and thro him, above all things in this World? Have I accordingly, deliberately and solemnly given up my self to him, to be pardon'd thro the Merit of his active and passive Obedience, and to be sanctify'd by his Spirit, and for the accomplishing the whole of my Salvation? *1 Per. 2. 7. John 1. 12.*

4. Is Sin in some measure mortify'd in me? The Life and Reign of Sin, and the Life and Power of Grace, cannot consist in the same Soul at the same time. Hath it not that peaceable Possession in my Heart, and Authority there, which once I was contented to give and yield unto it; But it is now my grief and burden to feel it *moving* and *stirring* in my Heart, tho it does not rule? And do I, thro the assistance of Grace, labour accordingly to mortify my inward Lusts and vile Affections, and to purify my Heart from secret Sins? See *Rom. 8. 13. Rom. 6. 5, 6, 7, 16. & 7. 24. Acts 15. 9. Rom. 5. 24.*

5. Doth the Interest of God and Christ prevail in my Heart, above the Interest of the World or of the Flesh?

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Do I seek chiefly, and above all other things, the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness? Do I endeavour (tho I come short in my Endeavours) to keep my self unspotted of the World, and that I hate the Garments spotted with the Flesh? Do I love God and Christ sincerely, tho I cannot say I love him as he hath loved me, nor so much as I desire to do, which is my Grief and Sorrow; but yet that I love him, and that is my Peace and Comfort? Do I hate that which is a Grief unto him? Am I grieved at his Absence, and rejoice at his Presence? Do I love his People; any that are like him, and bear his Image and Stamp upon their Hearts? Do I love his Word and Ordinances, and yet I cannot take up contentedly with them, without his Presence in them? Am I grieved when he is dishonour'd by my self or others, tho I grieve for it less than I should, because I love him less than I ought? Do I desire unfeignedly an Heart that should be willing to part with *all for him*, things sinful in themselves at all times, and things lawful when he calls me to it? Do I in my Judgment approve all his Ways as most eligible and most safe? And would I have an Heart to love, and long, and look for his Appearance in his Glory?

6. Do I labour to be holy in all manner of Conversation, to be truly and unfeignedly religious towards God, righteous towards Men, sober and temperate in the Government of my self, and diligent and faithful in the Discharge of all my relative Duties? to be watchful over my self, *viz.* over my *Thoughts*, over my *Affections*, over my *Words*, and over my *Actions*, and also over my *Aims* and *Ends*?

7. Do I labour to be *sincere* in all that I do?

8. Do I consent to and own the *Covenant* I was enter'd into at my Baptism?

Now if upon serious Examination of our selves we find that there is any Seed or Principle of *true Grace* wrought in our Hearts, and that it is the sincere Purpose of our Heart to walk with God; then we ought to encourage our selves to come to this Ordinance, which was instituted to strengthen the weak Christian. The more Sin I find in my self that is unallow'd, and not indulg'd and favour'd by me; the greater need I have to go thither,

ther, in order to the farther Mortification and Destruction of it in my Heart.

But that no real sincere Christian, doubting of the Truth of Grace in them, and their Right to partake of this Ordinance, should thro their Mistake be depriv'd of it, and that spiritual Benefit, Strength, and Comfort, which they might receive thereby : it may be very useful in order to the discovery of the Truth of Grace, under the Doubts and Fears of *weak Christians*, after true Debate and Search into their own Souls, to answer these following Questions to themselves.

1. Do you not see your self utterly lost and undone ? Do you not see your Misery out of Christ ?

2. Are you not sensible of the Sins that brought you into this miserable Condition ? Is it not the Burden that your Soul groans under, and would be heartily willing to be eased of it, as ever sick Man would be of his Sicknes, or Prisoner of his Chains ? Doth it not grieve you, that your Sins have been committed ? And if they were to do again, can you not say, by the Grace of God, I would not do them ?

3. Do you conscientiously practise whatever you have been convinc'd is your Duty, and dare not omit it when you know it ? Do you give your self to Prayer and Meditation, and other Duties ? And yet do you see the Emptiness and Insufficiency of them to justify you in the sight of God ? That as you dare not omit them, so you dare not rest in them, nor rely upon them, because you see your Prayers have need of Pardon, and your Tears have need of being wash'd in the Blood of Christ ? That you do go out of your self, and seek for Salvation in *another* ? And therefore,

4. Do you unfeignedly desire Christ, and hunger and thirst for *him* and *his Righteousness*, as that which can only be sufficient to cover the Nakedness of your Soul ? Are you willing to accept of him upon any Terms, upon his own Conditions, for your *Lord* and *Saviour* ? Are you willing that he should sanctify, as well as save you ? and bring you to Obedience, as well as unto Glory ? Doth your Judgment value him above all ? and your Will chuse him before all other things ? and are your Affections of Love, Desire, and Joy set upon him ? If you doubt whether you love him, yet tell

tell me whether you *would* love him? If you would, you do. If you doubt whether you have already receiv'd him, yet tell me whether you are *willing*, unfeignedly willing, to take him upon his own Terms, and chuse him for your Treasure, and your Happiness, and your chiefest Joy? If you are truly willing thus to receive him, you have receiv'd him; and tho your Faith be weak, yet you have an Evidence that it is true and saving, and that you have a right to him, and to his Privileges that he hath purchas'd by his Death, and will seal unto you in the Sacrament: *John 1. 12.*

You are one of his People, if you are made willing in the Day of his Power: *Psal. 110. 3. Thy People shall be willing in the Day of thy Power.* Are you willing therefore to forsake every known Sin? willing to perform every known Duty? to bear every Burden he shall lay upon you, and willing to be what he would have you to be? You are then one of his People, for whom he laid down his Life. You are one of his Friends, if you make conscience of doing whatsoever he commands you, and are griev'd where you come short; *John 15. 13, 14.* If it be your sincere Desire and Endeavour to live to him, it is an Evidence that he died for you: if it be your Care to walk in his Ways, to do his Will, to make him your End, and his Glory your Aim in all your Actions, or in the general Scope of your Life; then you are one for whom he died, and whose Death you are in particular in this Ordinance to commemorate. See *Gal. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 2. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 15.*

Having spoken to the first Head of Examination, namely, our *Graces*; concerning which, every Communicant is to examine himself: so likewise he is to examine himself, next, concerning his *Sins*; which are like that accursed thing whereof God speaketh to *Joshua*, *Josh. 7. 11.* they must therefore be search'd out: they will be like the wild *Gourd* that brought Death into the Pot, and which, if not search'd out and cast away, will turn the sacramental Bread and Wine into spiritual Bane: *Prov. 28. 13. He that covereth his Sins shall not prosper, but whose confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy.* It's said of the Viper, that when she goeth to join with her Mate, she casteth out all her Poison; how much more ought we, when we go to have Communion with our

our Heavenly Spouse, the Lord Jesus Christ, cast out our Sins, which are a spiritual Poison, worse than that of the most poisonous Viper or Serpent?

In this *Examination* we must search after our evil and sinful Thoughts, Words and Deeds, after our Sins of Omission and Commission; so also after our sinful manner of performing holy Duties, and more especially after the Sins we have committed since our last partaking of that blessed Sacrament, and such as are most against the Vows and Covenant that we have formerly made with the Lord, and which lie most upon our Conscience, disgrace our Profession, or are greatest Occasions of grieving and quenching the holy and blessed Spirit, and deadening of our own Spirits; that being found out, they may be the more lamented and mourned for, and the Pardon of them more earnestly begg'd and sought for.

In this Examination of our selves, it may be very useful to set before us the Glass of the Law for our Light and Rule, as has been mention'd under a former Head, and to read over a Catalogue or Table of Duties commanded, and Vices forbidden therein, which may be read with pausing and due Consideration; staying our Thoughts most upon those particular Sins, whereof we find our selves most guilty. And in the reading over those which are principal and most common, if our Conscience is awake, it may bring to our remembrance those other Sins we may be guilty of, tho they are not mention'd therein. And having examin'd and search'd our Hearts thorowly of all our known Sins, then let us humble our selves before the Throne of Grace, in a true and unfeign'd Acknowledgment and Confession of them, judging and condemning our selves for them before the Lord, with a broken and contrite Heart, under the Sense of them.

And as our Confession of Sin must be particular, and of special Sins, so also it should be full, in regard of the Aggravations of them; as *David's* was, *2 Sam. 24. 10.* in his Confession of that Sin of numbering the People. See what Terms of Aggravation he heapeth up: (1.) *I have sinned.* (2.) *I have sinned greatly.* (3.) *I have done foolishly;* and now, *O Lord, I beseech thee take away the Iniquity of thy Servant.* The more particular we are in our

our Confession of Sin, the more Comfort we may find therein. And as we desire the Pardon of them, let them be acknowledg'd fully, and no Circumstance of Aggravation be wanting therein, by which they may appear, as they are in themselves, the more *soul* and *filthy*. And having thus confess'd them, pour out your Soul in hearty and fervent Prayer to the Lord for the Pardon and Forgiveness of them; and then be earnest with him to make that Ordinance effectual to your Comfort, to the mortifying of your Lusts, the strengthening of your Graces, and especially the confirming of your Faith and comfortable Hope of Pardon and Forgiveness, and all other spiritual Blessings, thro' the Blood of the everlasting Covenant. [See what is written more largely on this Head, in the foregoing Chapter of *Fasting and Humiliation*, with an examinatory Table likewise therein.]

Having thus prepar'd your self, go not in the strength of your Preparations, but in the strength of Jesus Christ, looking for acceptance only in and thro' his Merits and Mediation; for tho' we have prepar'd our selves after the best manner that we can, yet if with an impartial Eye we shall look back upon our Preparations, how full of Weaknesses, Infirmities and Imperfections shall we find them? So that if Christ do not cover both our Person and Preparations with the Robe of his Righteousness, and sprinkle them with his Blood, neither our Persons nor Preparations can find acceptance with God. Cast therefore all thy Preparations at the Feet of Jesus Christ, and say, Lord, I come not in the strength of these, or depending on them, but only in thy Strength; Promise in thy alone Name and Mediation to partake of thy Body and Blood, and of the Benefits of thy Death and Passion! and thou may'st be confident, that God will graciously overlook thy manifold Weaknesses and Imperfections in it, and accept of thee and thy Services; in and thro' his beloved Son, Jesus Christ. I bid you, and bid you. In going thither, it may be reasonable to meditate on the End and Benefit of this solemn Ordinance. As, (1.) Of the Death of Christ, to being instituted as a Memorial thereof. (2.) The spiritual Strengthening and Nourishment of our Souls there. (3.) The strengthening of our Faith, in respect to the Pardon and Forgiveness of our Sins. (4.) The sealing of the Covenant of

Grace, with all the Blessings thereof, to the believing Soul, (5.) The encreasing of our spiritual Union and Communion with Christ and all his Members, &c. This may be a special means to stir up in us a spiritual Appetite after this Ordinance.

2. Go with a strong Expectation to receive much from God, in and thro that Ordinance, who usually intargeth himself to all those who come with enlarg'd Hearts, and with expectation of spiritual Blessings. *Open thy Mouth wide, saith the Lord (Psal. 81. 10.) and I will fill it.* As therefore God hath promis'd, in the Covenant of Grace, to be our God, to write his Law in our Hearts, to pardon our Sins, to subdue our Corruptions, to give us a soft Heart, to give us Grace here, and Glory hereafter, &c. let us go with an expectation of these, and such spiritual Blessings, and we shall not be disappointed of our Hopes.

3. Carefully avoid Distractions, as much as possibly you can, thro the whole Administration; gird up the Loins of your Mind, and be intent upon the work you are about; be watchful over your Thoughts, and labour to keep your Heart close to the Ordinance.

4. Approach to the Lord's Table with all holy Reverence, in respect of God's glorious Majesty, who is in a special manner present there, who doth behold his Guests, and will be sanctify'd by all who draw nigh unto him, *Lev. 10. 3.*

5. Approach thereto with all Humility, in respect of your own Vileness and Unworthiness, who are but sinful Dust and Ashes, and may be conscious of more Corruption in your own Heart (being thro Divine Grace made sensible thereof) than you can know to be in the Heart of any other: and therefore say not such an one is ignorant, and such an one is loose in his Life and Conversation, so as to hinder you in your present Duty; but say, Lord, I am ignorant, I am unworthy to draw nigh to thee in so holy an Ordinance, not worthy to gather up the Crumbs under thy Table: and know, that the more unworthy you are in your own Account, the worthier Guest you are in the Account of God.

II. We come now to the Duties to be perform'd in the time of receiving.

1. Let

1. Let your Care be to bring up your Heart and Affections to this Ordinance, and to put forth all the strength you can in the partaking thereof; I mean the strength of your Affections.

2. Remember the Death of Christ, which is his Command in the Institution of it; for, saith he, *This do in remembrance of me*, viz. of my bitter Death and Passion, and of my dying Love, which I have manifested therein to the sinful Children of Men. It was instituted for a solemn Memorial of that great Sacrifice, the Lord Jesus Christ himself; that his Death might never be forgotten, but be ever fresh in our Memories. And why must his Death be thus remember'd at this Ordinance? because thereby the Covenant of Grace was seal'd and seal'd, our Redemption purchas'd, our Sins expiated, our Reconciliation made with God, and the Foundation of our Graces laid, which issue in our eternal Glorification. Let out thy Heart therefore in a serious Meditation of those manifold Sufferings of Christ, which is the reason, the main Business of this Ordinance. His whole Life was a continual Suffering, from his Birth to his Death; the Meanness of his Birth, and Flight in his Infancy, the manifold Reproaches and Persecutions which he underwent by the Jews, and their cruel handling of him from thence to his Death; his being bound, arraign'd and condemn'd as a Malefactor, buffeted with their Hands, beat with Staves, scourg'd with Whips, making long Furrows on his Back; their putting a Crown of sharp Thorns upon his Head, laying an heavy Cross on his Back, with his Hands and Feet nail'd to it, and the Gall and Vinegar that was given him for his Drink: these were so many Instances and Aggravations of his Sufferings, which he was afterwards to undergo; and his Body being thus broken with Torments, for our Sakes he was made, thro his whole Life, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief; Isa. 53. 3.

But more especially [when at this Ordinance] take a turn with our blessed Saviour in the Garden, by meditating on his bitter Agony there, sweating therein Drops of Blood, which was never known in any other; thick Blood, as the word *ἰσχυρὸν* properly signifieth: Luke 22. 44. *His Sweat was, as it were, great Drops of Blood, falling down to the Ground:* which sheweth his Blood

passed thro the Pores of his Body in great abundance; so that (as Bernard speaks) not only the Eyes of Christ, but all the Parts of his Body did seem to weep, and that *Tears of Blood*. The Coldness of the Night, his lying on the Ground, and the exceeding Greatness of his Fear at that time, which naturally draws the Blood from the outward Parts, set forth the Greatness of his Agony; for it was in a cold Night, lying on the Ground, that he sweat Drops of Blood. And what put our blessed Lord into this bitter Agony? doubtless it was the Apprehension of what he was to suffer in our stead, as appears by his Prayer in that Agony [*Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me.*] Now if the Apprehension of what he was to suffer was so bitter, how bitter were his Sufferings on the Cross, when under the Sense also of his Father's Wrath for our Sins, he cry'd out, *My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* By which was not imply'd, that the Deity was sever'd from the Humanity, but that the Father had withdrawn from him all sensible feeling of his loving Favour, and had restrain'd the Influence of those Beams, which might any way refresh his troubled Soul. So that he might well say, as the captive Jews did, Lam. 1. 12. *Behold and see if there be any Sorrow like to my Sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the Day of his fierce Anger.*

3. As throughout the time of the Administration of this Ordinance, so especially when you see the Bread broken, and the Wine poured forth, then think how Christ's blessed Body was broken with Torments, and his Blood shed for the Remission of thy Sins, as much as if it had been for thine alone, and not for any other: be thus steeping thy Thoughts in these Meditations of Christ's bitter Death and manifold Sufferings.

But then this Remembrance of his Death must be an operative and practical Remembrance, working up our Hearts to, and labouring from thence to quicken, excite and awake in our Souls these following Graces.

1. Labour now to awaken *Repentance*, and a bleesing Sorrow in your Heart for all your past Sins, and especially those that lit heaviest upon your Conscience. Say to thy Soul in some such Soliloquies as these: O my Soul, that ever I should have been such a vile Wretch! that I should have so grievously offended my gracious and heavenly

heavenly Father! O what a mercy is it that I am out of Hell! God might have cut me down in my Sins, and cast me down into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and hath he hitherto spar'd me? and doth he now offer me a Pardon seal'd in the Blood of his dear Son? O the unsearchable Riches of his Free Grace and Mercy! O my Soul! how should this melt thee into penitent Tears and Sorrow! How should this Consideration make thee loath and hate every Sin that thou hast ever been guilty of, and make thee truly willing to renounce and forsake them all, to turn to the Lord now in sincere Obedience, and to return unto him with thy whole Heart?

2. Awaken and excite a spiritual Apperice in your self; say to your Soul, Happy, yea, thrice happy, (O my Soul) are they, whose Sins are forgiven, and whose Iniquities are pardon'd; blessed are they to whom the Lord will not impute their Transgressions, but will pardon them in and through his Son: yea, happy are they whose Justification is testify'd to their Consciences by their Sanctification; and by their unfeign'd Subjection to him, and endeavouring to walk before him in all holy Obedience. O my Soul, that this may be my Portion, whatever God denies me else in this World! O that this may be a Day, wherein I may have a clear Manifestation of God's pardoning Mercy made to my Soul! O that I may receive a plentiful Effusion of the Graces of his holy Spirit into my Heart! O that my Lusts and Corruptions may be mortify'd and subdu'd! O that I may be enabled to do all my Duties better than ever I have done! O that I may be more watchful over my Heart and Tongue, and all my Ways, than ever I have been! O that my Soul may depart much better'd, much reviv'd, comforted and strengthen'd from this holy Ordinance!

3. Awaken Faith. This Grace is especially to be exercised at this Ordinance. Hereby the Soul seeth and discerneth the Body and Blood of Christ, under the Elements of Bread and Wine; and by Faith it receiveth him, and feedeth upon him. Hereby a Believer may perceive enough in the Blood of Christ, by which he may resolve his Doubts, scatter his Fears, and supply all his spiritual Wants, and find a Remedy against all Soul-Distempers, by a believing Application of it to himself. Here let us humbly cast our selves at the Feet of Christ,

and seriously and deliberately own and acknowledge him
 for our only and *all-sufficient Saviour*; humbly cast thy
 self on the free Mercy of God, and his infinite Merits
 and Intercession, for the obtaining the Pardon of all thy
 Sins; and consent to take him for thy Lord and Saviour,
 and be willing he should rule in thee by his Holy Spirit,
 and govern thee by his Laws. *O my Soul*, willingly
 freely, deliberately surrender thy self to him, to be par-
 don'd in his Blood, to be sanctify'd by his Spirit; so
 out of thy self to him, and fiducially trust and depend
 on him, for Grace as well as pardoning Mercy. And
 tho thou hast before given up thy self to him, and by
 Acts of Faith united thy self to him, yet labour now to
 excite and put forth stronger Acts of Faith and Affiance
 in him, that thou mayst be more firmly united to him.
 Say, Lord I come to thee! Sweet Saviour, give my
 Soul here anew to thee! Take it, wash it in thy pre-
 cious Blood from the Guilt of all my Sins, and sanctify
 it by thy Holy Spirit. Thou hast said, *Whoever comes*
to thee, thou wilt in no wise cast out. *O receive me*, tho
 an unworthy Wretch: *O blessed Saviour*, absolve me
 from the Guilt of all my Sins, of every sort, and kind.
O keep my poor Soul, that I now commit to thee, unto
 eternal Life. *There is no other Name given under Hea-*
ven, whereby I can be saved; therefore I do humbly pro-
 fess and declare, that thy Merits, Obedience, and Suf-
 ferings, I do alone depend on and abide by, for my Re-
 conciliation and Peace with God, and for all the Blessings
 which thou hast purchas'd, and which are made over in
 the Covenant, in and with thy blessed Self, to Believers;
 and do now renew my *Baptismal Covenant*, resolving by
 thy Grace to be for ever *thine*, *hasteb* but *hasteb* *hasteb*
 4. Awaken, excite, and stir up thy Heart in Love to
 God and to Jesus Christ, who out of his free Grace and
 rich Mercy did send his dearly beloved Son out of his
 own Bosom into the World, to die so bitter and cursed
 a Death for Man's Redemption. Say to thy self, *O my*
Soul, how great was this Love! He did not thus for
 the Angels that fell; and how great is the Love of Christ
 in giving himself for us, that the eternal Son of God
 should take our Nature, that he might therein endure
 and suffer so much for poor Worms, for Enemies; that
 he should have his precious Body thus broken, and his
 Blood

Blood shed, to redeem us! Was there ever Love like this! O my Soul, what hath been done by thee in return for all this Love? O my sweet Jesus, thou art worthy of all Love and Service from me, tho my Heart is base and disingenuous, and is not sufficiently affected with thy Love. Thou art infinitely lovely, tho my Heart loves thee not as it ought to do. Thou wast exceeding lovely and amiable, even in thy Humiliation in this World; but O how glorious art thou now triumphing in Heaven! O how beneficial are thy Merits? how desirable are thy Graces? O let that Fulness of Grace that is poured forth without measure on thee, flow down to us thy poor Members. O my Soul, imagine now thou sawest thy sweetest Saviour nail'd on the Cross, his Body torn thereby, and his Side pierc'd with a Spear: canst thou chuse but love him, who endur'd so much to redeem thee from eternal Misery? The Apostle, ravill'd with the Love of Christ, cries out, *If any Man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema, Maranatha.* The penitent Woman, *Luke 7. 47.* to whom much was forgiven, loved much. And shall it not be so with thee? And now consider, O my Soul; Christ says, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments.* If thou love him, love him in Sincerity, and delight to please him and obey him: Love his Person, highly value his Merits, love his Ordinances, love his Graces, love his Commands. O my Soul, canst thou now, upon all these Considerations, say with the Apostle Peter, *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*

5. Excite in thy self Love to all Christians, to all the Members of Christ. Pray earnestly, that the Lord would protect and defend them, that he would be pleas'd to perfect Holiness more and more in their Hearts, and unite them more and more to one another in his Truth, and in the Bond of Love, and make them more exemplary in a holy Conversation; that he would supply them with all needful Mercies, and conduct them safely to his heavenly Kingdom.

6. Excite Love in thy Soul to thy very Enemies; say to thy self, O my Soul, thou must forgive, if thou expectest to be forgiven: thy dear Saviour requires this of thee, *Mat. 6. 14, 15.* If thou expectest to be forgiven to many thousand Talents, thou must not take thy

Brother

Brother by the throat for an hundred Pence, *Mat. 18. 28.* Thou must labour to be *excited*, as thy heavenly Father is *merciful*. Readiness to forgive Injuries and Wrongs, is a great sign of a gracious Spirit, but Malice and Revenge is a black Mark and Character. Therefore, O my Soul, pray for thy very Enemies this day, Lord convince them of their Sins, give them Hearts to repent of them, turn their Hearts from them, and draw them to thy Son, that in him they may have Pardon and Life, and give them such a Frame of Spirit, that thou mayst bless them. O that I may meet their Souls in Heaven, where we shall always love and agree together, and never fall out more.

7. Awake and excite in thy self *gratitude* and *Thankfulness*. Say with holy David, *Bless the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits.* Hath Christ redeemed thee from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for thee? Hath he redeemed thee, and that not with Silver and Gold, but with his own precious Blood? Hath he made thy peace with God, thro' the Blood of his Cross? Hath he conquered Death and Satan for thee? Thro' his Blood, shalt thou have an Entrance into Heaven, and eternal Glory? O transcendent Mercy! O how great is this Salvation, which Christ hath purchased for us! O the Height and Depth, and Length and Breadth of the Love of God in Christ Jesus! Be astonished, O my Soul, at this Love, and never be forgetful of it: call upon the holy Angels to join with thee this day in blessing God for these great and glorious Benefits, and never be unmindful again of so transcendent Mercies.

8. Employ thy outward Senses, to stir up in thy Heart, *formal Graces*. In the time of the Administration, the Work of the Communicant, lies not so much between the Body and the Elements, as the Soul and Christ. When thou seest the Bread broken, and the Wine poured forth, think of the tormenting Pain and Anguish thy blessed Lord endured, when his Body was broken on the Cross. Canst thou see Christ's Body broken for thee, and thy Heart not break with deep Contrition for thy Sins? Consider the Greatness of his dying Love, that made him submit to such Sufferings for our sakes. Think thou now hearest him say, Behold, my Friends, how my Flesh is torn and wounded for your sakes;

sakes, for sinful Creatures! Was there ever Grief, was there ever Love like mine? Consider also the vile and odious Nature of Sin, which brought him to such Miseries, and required such Blood for the Expiation of it. Consider likewise what the Redemption of every Soul (that shall be saved) did cost: it cost more than all the Men and Angels in the World could ever have paid for it. When thou seest the Minister offering the Bread and Wine to the Communicants; then by the Eye of Faith see God's Love in offering his Son to every true Believer; for as verily as the Minister offers the Bread and Wine, so truly and really doth God offer Christ, with all the Benefits of his Death and Passion, as Reconciliation, Redemption, Remission of Sins, &c. to thee who believest in him.

When therefore thou stretchest forth the Hand of thy Body to receive the Bread, stretch forth the Hand of Faith, to apprehend and receive Jesus Christ into thy Heart with Joy and Gladness; and rest upon him, as for Pardon of thy Sins here, so for eternal Life and Salvation hereafter. Feed upon Christ, by a believing Application of him, and all his Benefits, to thy own Soul's Nourishment and Comfort; as being born for thee; that he might be thy Saviour, to save thee from thy Sins; as having performed perfect Obedience to the Law, that his Righteousness might be imputed to thee; and that he died this bitter Death to free thee from eternal Death, which thy Sins had deserved. This appropriating Act of Faith, as it is most suitable to this Ordinance, so it is very comfortable and desirable; yet the other Act of receiving Christ and resting upon him, is the essential Act of Faith that unites us to him: which may prevent the Discouragement of any true Believer, that cannot thus apply Christ and the Benefits of his Death to themselves. When then thou receivest the Bread and eatest it, say, Lord, thou art the Bread of Life, thou art the only Redeemer of lost Souls; I freely take thee for my Lord and Saviour, I freely consent to thy Covenant, which by thy Mercy I was (in my Baptism) admitted into. Lord save me, and sanctify me. O interpose thy Merits for my Pardon, and strengthen me by thy Grace, that I may be faithful to thee to the end, and so may at last receive a Crown of Life. Lord behold the Sacrifice

of thy Son; for the sake of his Obedience and Sufferings, be pleas'd to be reconcil'd to me, to pardon all my Transgressions, and by thy Grace to sanctify my Heart, that *no Sin may have dominion over me*. Fill me with Joy and Peace in *believing*. If I have found favour in thine eyes, give me more and more of the Graces of thy Holy Spirit, and cause me to grow in Grace daily, and to be fruitful in good Works.

10. When thou takest the Cup into thy hand, think again of the wonderful Love of Christ, that he should purchase us to himself with *his own Blood*. O the infinite Value, the infinite Worth of Christ's Blood! This was the Blood that only could make Expiation, and give God full Satisfaction for our Offences; one Drop whereof is worth a World. This is the Blood of the *everlasting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20. whereby our blessed Saviour ratify'd and confirm'd the Covenant of Grace with fallen Man; which Covenant shall never be alter'd or chang'd. O blessed Saviour, wash my Soul with this thy precious Blood, from the Guilt of all my Sins, and cleanse me from all my Iniquities; and be to me all that which thou hast graciously undertaken to be to thy People, that shall be saved by thy Grace.

11. Join with the rest of the Communicants in a hearty praising God for all these glorious Favours and Benefits. Let thy Soul rejoice in God, and call upon all within thee to praise his holy Name.

12. Pray earnestly that Christ's Kingdom may be propagated, and that many others may be brought to understand and partake of this so great Salvation purchased by our blessed Lord and Saviour; pray that he may be more known, believ'd on, and faithfully obey'd all the World over.

III. Having spoken of those Duties that are preparatory for this Ordinance, and what are to be perform'd by us in the time of receiving, we come now to speak of those that must follow, after we have been at the Lord's Table. It is the indispensable Duty of all that partake of it, that they labour to live suitably to so great a Privilege, and the solemn Engagement and Obligations they are now laid under. To that end,

1. When the Ordinance is over, withdraw your self

to some secret place, and there on your knees bless the Lord for Jesus Christ, and for the Covenant of Grace made to you in him; for adding the Sacraments as Seals of the Covenant, for the Confirmation and Strengthening of your Faith, and for any Comfort and Refreshment which you have found therein; and farther, for being born in a Land where you enjoy the glorious Light of the Gospel, and where you have such great Helps and Advantages for the eternal Good of your Souls. God hath honour'd you herein more than many others, whom he doth not invite nor call (while in an impenitent state) to come unto his Table.

2. Labour to keep your Heart in the fervent Love of God and Jesus Christ; beware of quenching that spiritual Heat which was kindled in you, which Satan will then especially be endeavouring to do, either by drawing you into Sin again, or at least by cooling your Affections more to spiritual things. And let your Care and Watchfulness herein be the greater, considering that a sudden quenching of the Spirit will exceedingly tend to the hardening of your Hearts. With an holy Delight and Joy meditate often how much thou owest to God for Jesus Christ, for this greatest Gift that could possibly have been given to the Children of Men; for sending him, to be our Redeemer in our so low and lost Estate: and how much we owe to Christ, for so willingly condescending to undertake this great Work for us. And as he is in himself, so let him be in all respects, truly precious, in thy account; his Name, his Person, his Offices, his Performances, (both his active and passive Obedience) his Life, his Death, his Resurrection, his Ascension, and his Intercession; his Authority and Power, whereby he governs, and which he exerciseth for the Good of his Church; his Doctrine and Ordinances, and his Interest, all which are precious to Believers.

3. Meditate often on the Privileges, Promises, and Comforts of the Covenant of Grace seal'd by the Blood of thy dear Saviour; *Justification, Sanctification, Adoption, Glorification*. O how great are these Privileges! And how truly precious likewise are all the Promises of the Covenant, together with the Comforts of it, which are the Consolations of the Holy Spirit here, and eternal Comfort hereafter!

4. Earnestly

4. Earnestly beg, and humbly expect Grace from Christ, to enable you to crucify your inward Lusts and Corruptions, and especially those you find your Heart most pester'd with, and that have been most prevailing. Having entertain'd Christ into your Soul, do not unhal- low it again, by suffering any evil Lust to reign and rule therein.

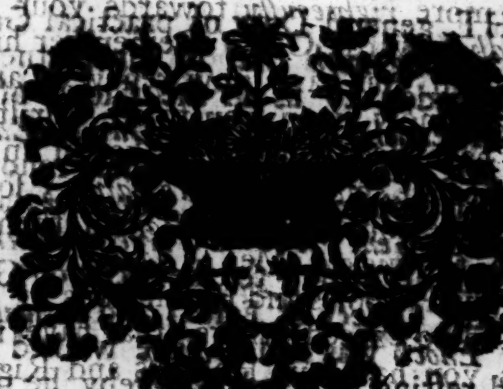
5. Maintain a stricter Watch over your self against all Sin for the time to come. Were our Souls wash'd at the Sacrament with the Blood of Christ, from the filthy Spots and Stains of Sin, and shall we ever again wil- lingly return unto it? When tempted to sin again at any time, remember you have been at a Sacrament, and have there renew'd your Covenant with the Lord, to be for ever his; and must not be so base and false, as wil- lingly and deliberately again to sin against him. Resolve and strive in his Grace and Strength to crucify those Sins for which Christ was crucify'd, to hate, abhor, and aban- don every Sin, as much as in your lieth.

6. Labour to live more soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World, Tit. 2. 12. More soberly towards your selves, more righteously towards your Neighbour, and more godly towards God. Remember his Vows are upon you, which you have now renew'd, and stronger Obligations are now upon you to all Christian Duties. And as you have been made partaker of an Ordinance not common to all, but peculiar to Saints, so your Lives should have some somewhat peculiar in them, which is not common to wicked Men; 1 Peter. 1. 17. Labour to strengthen your Purposes and Resolutions of living more unto God, and to exceed others (that have not been so privileg'd as you have) in Holiness and Righteousness, so as to credit your Profession, and to adorn the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Lay every Temptation you meet at any time with, to the Vow you laid your self under when you was at his Table, to be more watchful against Sin, and more careful to walk in the ways of Holiness, which (thru the Blessing of God) may be a great means to prevent your falling into that Sin you are tempted to. 7. Labour to live in Charity with your Brethren, to which you are now in a special manner engag'd. Con- sider if Christ hath so loved us, and forgiven us so much, we ought to love our Enemies, and heartily forgive them.

them. Remember what the Apostle says, *Beloved, if Christ so loved us, we ought also to love one another*; 1 Joh. 4. 11.

8. Often meditate on the Joys of Heaven, and the eternal Supper of the Lamb, and the blessed Life which the Saints do live above; Luke 14. 15. *Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God.*

The End of the Second Part.



PART

The moral Actions of Man's Life are sply resembled by the Metaphor of Warfare, which is a moving from

CHAP. I.
Of Walking with God in general.

THE general Duty of practical Godliness, for
to *walk with God* in Godliness, is com-
mended to us in the *Book of Examples*,
Exodus, *Numbers*, *Job*, *Daniel*, *Esther* and
Job, and many others renowned in the
Scriptures. It is commended to *Abraham*, and in him
to all the faithful. *Gen. 17. 1.* To *live by Faith*, (which is
to frame our *Life* according to the Will of God reveal'd
in his Word, the *Object of Faith*) and to *walk with God*,
are all one. *Enoch* was said to *walk with God*,
believing and resting on God, whereby he pleas'd him;
for according to what we live, according to that we are
said to walk. And in the New Testament, the Christian
Conversation is ordinarily call'd by the name of *walking*.
Sometimes a *walking in Christ*, *Col. 2. 6.* Sometimes a
walking in the Spirit in which we live, *Gal. 5. 25.* and a
walking after the Spirit, *Rom. 8. 1.* sometimes *in the*
Light, *1 John 1. 7.* and those that abide in Christ must
so walk, even as he walked, *1 John 2. 6.* These Phrases
set together, tell us what it is to walk with God.

The moral Actions of Man's Life are aptly resembled by the Metaphor of *Walking*, which is a moving from one

one place to another. No Man while he liveth here is at home, in the place where he shall be: there are two contrary Homes to which every one is always going, either to Heaven or Hell; every Action of our Lives is one Pace or Step whereby we go to the one place or the other. The Holiness or Wickedness of the Action is the several way to the place of Happiness, or place of Torment: In that God's own Children, while they live in this World as Pilgrims and Strangers, are but in the way to, not in the Country which they seek, which is Heavenly.

This Life of Faith and Holiness is a going out of our selves, and a continual returning to God from the way of Sin and Death; and a settled going forward in all those Acts of Obedience, which God hath ordain'd to be the way for all his Children to walk in unto eternal Life.

As Atheism is the Sum of Wickedness, so all true Religion and Piety is call'd by the name of Godliness or Holiness, which is nothing else but our Devotedness to God and living to him, according to our Relation to him in Christ, as being thus devoted in Heart and Life. Practical Atheism is a living as without God in the World, Eph. 2. 12. and on the contrary, Godliness is a living as with and to God in the World, and in the Church; and is here call'd a walking with God. It is said to be so in these following respects:

1. Wherein by Sin we naturally are departed from God, and his Ways which he has appointed for us, so we, by the new and living way of Christ's Death and Resurrection; and by the new and living Work of Christ's Spirit, are brought near again to him, and set in his ways, by Repentance from dead Works, and by Faith towards God in Christ Jesus; which as the first Principles of true Religion, are the first Steps in this our walking with God.
2. The reveal'd Will of God is call'd God's Way, because in it God doth, as it were, come forth of the Secret of his holy Majesty, to shew his People their way to him; and so takes them along to himself; Psal. 25. 13, 14. Now he that walketh in this way of Righteousness reveal'd in the Word, that walks thereby according to God's Will in the several Passages and Turnings of his Life, keeping himself to this Rule, walks with God.

400 Of Walking with God in general.

3. He that lives a godly Life, and walketh after the Spirit, not after the Flesh, that is, led by the Spirit of God, having him for his Guide: In which respect he is said to walk with God.

4. He that by an Eye of Faith seeth God present before him in all his Actions, thinking of him often, upon all occasions, remembering him in his ways, setting the Lord always before him, as David did, seeing him that is invisible, as Moses did: doing all things as of God, and in his sight. He that so walketh that he always ob-

serveth God's presence, and keepeth him still in his eye in the Course of his Life; and that not only with a general and habitual, but as much as he can with an actual Intention to please and glorify God: This Man must needs be said to walk with God.

In a word, (1.) When we daily go on to repent of Sins past, believe in Christ Jesus for Pardon, and believe his Word for Direction.

(2.) When we walk not according to the Will of Man, but of God. (3.) When we walk not after the flesh,

but after the Spirit. (4.) When we set God before us, and walk as in his sight, then we walk with, before, after, and according to God. And that we may thus walk with God, consider

1. We are commanded to walk as Christ walked, 1 John 2.6. and it concerneth us to do so, if we would approve our selves to be Members of his Body: for it is monstrous, nay impossible, that the Head should go one way and the Body another.

Now our Saviour observ'd all these three inner Qualities of walking with God, the former (being justifying Faith and Repentance) not belonging to him, because he was without Sin.

2. It is all which the Lord requireth of us, for all his Love and Goodness shew'd unto us, in creating, preserving, redeeming and saving us. For what doth the Lord require of you, but to do justly, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with your God? Mic. 6.8.

3. If we walk with God, and keep close to him, we shall be sure to go in the right way, in that good old way which is call'd the way of holiness, Jer. 6.16. Mat. 3.8. in a most fruit, most happy, and (to a spiritual Man) most pleasant way, whose Paths are Peace, Prov.

3. 17. and which endeth in the Rest and everlasting Happiness.

pineness of our Souls. For God teacheth his Children to chuse this way, and if they happen to err, or to doubt of their way, they shall hear the Voice of God's Spirit behind them, saying, *this is the way, walk in it*; Isa. 48.

7. Psal. 25. 12. & 27. 11. & 111. 1. & 119. 101. & 138. 1.

4. If we walk with God, we shall walk safely, *Psal.* 112. 7. We shall not need to fear, tho ten thousand set themselves against us; for his Presence is with us and for us: his holy Angels encamp about his People; and while we walk in his ways, are charg'd to support us, lest we should receive any harm; *Psal.* 34. 7. & 91. 11, 12.

5. When we walk with God (tho we be alone, and without any other Companions) we walk with the best Company, such whereof there is most need and best use. While God and you walk together, you have an advantage above all that walk not with him; for you have thereby a blessed opportunity of that holy Acquaintance with God, whereby Peace and all Good shall come to you: *Job* 22. 21. You have opportunity to speak unto him, to ask him his Advice in every thing; praying with assurance of a gracious hearing. *Abraham* and his faithful Servant made use of his walking with God for these purposes, *Gen.* 24. Is it not a rare Favour, that the most high God shall vouchsafe to come down from Heaven, and walk on Earth with base Man; nay, rather to call up Man from Earth to Heaven, to walk with him? It would be therefore shameful and hateful Ingratitude, not to accept his Offer, and not to obey his Charge: *Phil.* 3. 20.

6. To let the Lord always in our sight, is an excellent Preservative and Restraint from Sin. With this Shield *Joseph* did repel and quench the fiery Darts of the Temptation of his leud Mistress: for who is so foolish and shameless, as to transgress wilfully the just Laws of a Father, King, and Judge, knowing and considering that he is present, and observes him with detestation if he do so?

7. To have the Lord always in our eye and thoughts, is an excellent Remedy against spiritual Sloth and Negligence in good Duties, and is a Spirit to quicken us, and make us more diligent and abundant in the Work of the Lord, *Psal.* 119. 37. What Servant can be slothful and false in his Master's sight; and what Master will keep and encourage a Servant that will not observe him and do his Commands, while he himself looketh on?

402 *Directions for walking with God,*

8. Walking with God in the manner before mention'd, doth exceedingly please God, *Heb. 11. 5.* please God's holy Angels, *1 Cor. 11. 10.* please God's faithful Ministers, *3 John 3, 4.* and doth please and strengthen all God's People with whom we converse. It is to *walk worthy of God in all well-pleasing, Col. 1. 9, 10.*

9. Thus walking with God, we shall be assur'd of God's Mercy and gracious Favour: he keepeth Covenant and Mercy with all his Servants, that walk before him with *all their heart, 1 Kings 8. 23. Psal. 32. 10. & 84. 11, 12.* When you thus walk in the Light, you have a gracious Fellowship with God, and *the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth you from all Sin, 1 John 1. 7.* There is *no Condemnation to you who thus walk, Rom. 8. 1.* Your Flesh, when you die, shall rest in Hope; for to them that thus set God before them, he *doth shew the Path of Life, which will bring them into his glorious Presence, where there is Fulness of Joy, and Pleasures for evermore; Psal. 16. 11.*

C H A P. II.

Of Walking with God, and Communion with him; Directions in order thereto.

THE Commandment to walk with God is indefinite without limitation, and therefore must be understood to be a walking with him in *all Things*, and that at *all Times*, in *all Companies*, and in *all Changes*, Conditions, and Estates of Life whatsoever: to walk with God in gross, is not sufficient.

We are not dispens'd with for any moment of our Life, but all the Days of our Life, and each Day of our Life, and each Hour of that Day, and each Minute of that Hour, we must *pass the time, the whole time of our dwelling here in Fear, 1 Pet. 1. 17.* even *all the day long, says Solomon, Prov. 23. 17.* We must endeavour to have a *Conscience void of Offence always, Acts 24. 16.* We must live *the rest of our Life, not to the Lusts of Men, but to the Will of God; 1 Pet. 4. 2.* taking heed
left

left at any time there be in us an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God; Heb. 3. 12. For,

1. For this end Christ died, to redeem us from the hands of our Enemies, that we might serve him in Holiness and Righteousness all the days of our Life; Luke 1. 74, 75.

2. The End of all the Instructions of the Word, which is the Light to our Feet in this walking, is, that it be bound upon our Hearts continually, to lead, to keep, and talk with us at all times; Prov. 6. 21, 22.

3. The Lusts of our own Hearts, and our Adversary the Devil, lie always upon the advantage to stay or divert us out of our Christian Course; so that upon every Intermision of our holy Care to please God, they take their opportunity to surprize us; 1 Per. 5. 8.

4. We are accountable to God for losing and mispending all that precious time wherein we do not walk in his ways; Eph. 5. 15, 16.

5. Besides, he that hath much work to do, or is in a long Journey, or is running a Race for a Prize, hath no need to lose any time. If we be cast behind in our Work and Race, we shall hardly recover our Loss, but with much Sorrow, with renew'd Faith, and with more than ordinary Repentance, and that with difficulty.

Wherefore having treated [in the Second Part of this Book] of those things that concern the trial, discovering, and securing of our State in Grace; and having premis'd in this, some things relating more generally to the great and indispensable Duty of walking with God, through the whole Course of our Lives: the following Directions (through the Lord's Blessing) may be very useful for the furthering us in a Course of real Piety and Godliness. And they shall be reduc'd to these following Heads, viz.

1. Awake with God in the Morning.
 2. Pour forth your Soul before him in secret Prayer and Thanksgiving.
 3. Read some Portion of the Holy Scripture.
 4. Live continually as in the Sight and View of God.
 5. Live by Faith.
 6. Observe all the Passages of God's Providence towards you.
 7. Be continually watchful.
- Of these in their order.

C H A P. III.

Of Awaking with God in the Morning.

THAT you may begin the Day with God, and offer unto him the First-fruits of your Thoughts and Affections, be advis'd to the practice of these following *Directions*,

1. As soon as you awake, and Sleep falls from your Eyes, lift up your Soul in hearty Praises and Thanksgivings unto God, *Psal. 139. 18.* for preserving you in the Night-season, and refreshing you with Rest and Sleep, and watching over you, and defending you from all the Dangers and Evils of the Night. Had he not been very gracious unto you, you might have lain on your Bed in Anguish and Pain, seeking Rest and finding none; or you might have slept the Sleep of *Death*. It was God that kept you and all that you had, and restor'd them again with new Mercies, when out of possession of your selves. Let not the Commonness of this Mercy make it seem less; but because God thus continues these Mercies to you, let it increase your Thankfulness: *Job 7. 17, 18.* When your Body therefore awakens; awake your Soul to some such holy and pious Thanksgivings, as the Sweet-Singer of *Israel* used to send up to God; *O Lord, thou art my God, early will I seek thee, Psal. 63. 1, 4, 5. I laid me down and slept, and thou hast sustain'd me, Psal. 5. 5.* I have been safe under the shadow of thy wings; thy Faithfulness and Truth have been my Shield and Buckler, *Psal. 91. 1, 4.* My Tongue shall speak of thy Righteousness and of thy Praise all the day long; *Psal. 35. 28.* Set this holy Man's Example before you for your Imitation, who no sooner awak'd but he was presently with God; *When I awake, I am still with thee, Psal. 139. 18.* Yea, so diligent and fervent was he in this Duty, that he prevented the Dawning of the Morning, as he professes, *Psal. 119. 147.*

2. Lift up your Heart to God in some short but fervent *Ejaculations*, that he would please to guide you by his

his Counsel, and act you by his holy Spirit, and strengthen you by his Grace, that you may honour and glorify him that Day; that he would bless you, and preserve you from all Evil, and keep you from Satan's Malice, the Power of any Temptation, and the Prevalency of any Corruption, and falling into Sin or Folly, to the Dishonour of his Name, and wounding of your Soul. And to this end act Faith on Christ, and rely on him for a Supply of all your spiritual Wants; and labour to draw forth, of his Fulness, Grace sufficient for the Day, and the Duties of it; for it pleas'd the Father that in him all Fulness should dwell [all Fulness of Wildom, Power and Spirit] that he might communicate thereof to his Members, that we of his Fulness may receive Grace for Grace; Col. 1. 10. John 1. 16.

3. Having thus humbly address'd your self to God, and consecrated your first Thoughts and Affections to him, set your self to some holy and pious Meditations; such as these:

1. On God's glorious *Attributes*; as, (1.) His infinite Purity and Holiness, and how all Sin is most contrary to his holy Nature. (2.) His Omnipresence and Omniscience, and how he sees and beholds all we do; yea, our very Thoughts and Intentions, as being always about our Paths, Psal. 139. 3. (3.) His All-sufficiency and infinite Power; being able to afford us all needful Help, and to supply all our Wants. (4.) His infinite Wisdom in governing the World, and all his Creatures, and how nothing happens but by his Providence. (5.) His infinite Mercy, Goodness, Truth, and Faithfulness, which he manifests towards his own People continually. To keep our Thoughts in some such Meditations as these in the Morning, at our first awaking, may be a good means to keep our Hearts in a good Frame, and in the Fear of God all the day after; and to fill us both with Reverence, and delightful Thoughts of God. As the covetous Worldling, when he awakes, has his Heart running after his Profits, and the voluptuous Man after his Pleasures; so let your Heart be set upon God, and take him for your chief Treasure and Portion, who is infinitely worthy of your best Love, and dedicate the first Fruits of your Heart unto him.

406 *Of Awaking with God in the Morning.*

2. When you arise out of your Bed, consider what a lively Emblem that is of the Resurrection of our Bodies from the Sleep of Death, when we shall hear the Trumpet sounding, and summoning us to appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ.

3. As you clothe your self, be humbled, under the Consideration, that the Shame of your Nakedness, and need of Clothing, came in by Sin. Think how happy they are, who have by Faith put on the Lord Jesus Christ, *Rom. 13. 14.* that are thereby cloth'd with his Righteousness, as that alone which can be sufficient to cover their Soul's Nakedness; and that being adorn'd with the Graces of his Holy Spirit, and being thus cloth'd, do watch and keep their Garments, *Rev. 16. 15.* and endeavour to keep themselves unspotted from the World, *James 1. 27.* who put on the whole Armour of God, that they may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil, *Eph. 6. 11.* And think how the Bodies of Saints shall then be cloth'd at the Resurrection, when Christ shall change them, and fashion them like to his own glorious Body, *Phil. 3. 21.*

4. When you see the Light of the Morning, let it put you in mind of the Sun of Righteousness, who shines with healing under his Wings, on many Nations, Congregations and Persons; and how happy their Condition is, into whose Hearts (being before darken'd) Christ hath shined, with the renewing and healing Light of his Grace. And think of that transcendent Glory that is in Heaven, where God manifests himself in Brightness and Glory, that is inexpressible and inconceivable.

5. Consider you are now brought to the beginning of another Day, which when it is done, you shall never see again. Consider therefore how careful you ought to be, to work while it is day, and to improve and imploy it so, as you may give a good account thereof at last. That you may not trifle any part of your precious time away, but be diligently working the Works of Righteousness while you have Opportunity, *John 9. 4.* cast in your Thoughts what are the Works and Businesses God calls me to this day, and humbly and earnestly beg (by some short Ejaculations) his gracious Assistance and Blessing, that you may perform them wisely and successfully,

cessfully, so as may tend to his *Honour*, and your own *Comfort*.

CHAP. IV.

Of Prayer and Thanksgiving.

HAVING thus begun the Day with God, omit not to offer up unto him, in a solemn manner, your Morning-Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving, and dare not to attempt any thing, till you have commended your self and your Affairs unto God. This Duty we find expressly commanded by our Saviour, *Mat. 6. 6.* and commended to us by his own Example, *Mark 1. 35.* Plead not therefore any Excuse from the multitude of any worldly Business, but let any thing be omitted rather than that; for the more and greater our Businesses are, the more need have we to offer up our Morning-Sacrifice to God, thereby to beg his Assistance and Blessing upon our Pains and Endeavours; it being the Ordinance he hath sanctify'd for that very end. The Time we spend in Prayer will be no Hindrance, but rather further our worldly Employments; for it will sanctify all things that we take in hand, making them successful to us: And God hath manifested his Approbation of this Duty, by discovering himself to his People herein. When did the Lord send that Soul-ravishing Message to *Daniel*, that he was *greatly beloved of God*, but when he was in *secret Prayer*? *Dan. 9. 20, 21, 22.* And doubtless many thousands have had their Hearts melted, their Fears scatter'd, their Doubts resolv'd, their Faith strengthen'd, their Hope and Comfort increas'd, and their Assurance settled, whilst they have been at secret Prayer. What Encouragement should this be to us in the constant Performance of this Duty? Beware of Slightness and Cushtomarieness herein, but be serious and fervent in it. To pray to God in an acceptable manner, is not to say over a Prayer, or to utter a few Petitions to him (Parrot-like) in a cold and formal manner; where there is not a true sense and feeling of the Evil, Danger and Desert of Sin,

and an earnest panting after pardoning Mercy and sanctifying Grace. It is the *fervent Prayer* only that is *effectual* , Jam. 5. 16. without this, there can be no true hearty praying to God such as he will accept, tho' the outside and external part of the Duty be perform'd never so speciously. God more regards the Sighs and Tears, and broken Expressions of a truly contrite and humble Heart pour'd forth before him, than the most study'd, set, and exactly form'd Devotions, that proceed from Formality, or that are perform'd merely to stop the Mouth of a natural Conscience. And this may be one special reason why our Prayers are so seldom answer'd, because they are perform'd with so little Life and Fervency. We cannot indeed be always alike *fervent* , but we must always strive against all Deadness and Distractions in them. And that we may therefore be directed farther in the performance of this great Duty in a right manner, I shall first shew what Prayer is, and by what kind of Expressions it is set forth in Scripture.

1. By the name of *Incense, and spiritual Sacrifice* , Psal. 141. 2. Mat. 5. 11. Rev. 5. 8. Holy Desires and Petitions, perform'd by Christ's Merits, are a sweet *Odour* in God's Nostrils, Rev. 8. 4.

2. It's call'd, a *lifting up of the Soul* , and of the Heart unto God, Psal. 25. 1. 'Tis not enough to kneel, and lift up our Eyes and Hands; but true Prayer consists in the Movings and Workings, and lifting up of our Hearts,

3. It's call'd, a *pouring forth of the Soul* ; 1 Sam. 1. 15. Psal. 62. 8. Lam. 2. 19.

4. A *knocking at the Door of Mercy* , Mat. 7. 7.

5. A *wrestling with the Almighty* ; this was figur'd in Jacob's wrestling, Gen. 32. 24—29. expounded, Hos. 12. 4. Col. 4. 12. Rom. 15. 30.

Now for preparing the Heart to this Duty, observe further these Rules:

1. Let us labour to deliver our selves from all evil Frames and Tempers of Spirit, before we approach the Presence of God. Come not with a Heart distracted with worldly Cares and Business, nor disturb'd with unruly Passions: God's way is first to *prepare the Heart* , and then to grant the Request; Psal. 10. 17. Job 11. 13, 14, 15.

2. Labour

2. Labour to get due and right Apprehensions of the glorious Majesty of God, before whom you are about to present yourselves. Set his glorious *Attributes* before the Eyes of your Minds: He declareth he will be sanctified of them that draw nigh to him, Lev. 10. 3. Ezek. 28. 22. 1 Pet. 3. 15. Consider his infinite Holiness, and the glorious Excellencies of that God, to whom we (poor Worms) are to address our selves. Take the wise Man's Advice, Eccl. 5. 2. *Be not rash with thy Mouth, and let not thy Heart be hasty to utter any thing before God.* The Saints, whose Prayers are recorded in Scripture for our imitation, had very high and large Apprehensions of the glorious *Attributes* of God, and set them forth amply in the beginning of their Prayers. So Solomon, 1 Kings 8. 23. *Jehosaphat*, 2 Chron. 20. 6. *Hezekiah*, 2 Kings 19. 15. *Jeremiah*, Jer. 32. 17. *Daniel*, Chap. 9. 4. *Nehemiah*, Chap. 1. 5. and as we see in the Apostles Prayer, Acts 4. 24.

3. Beg the gracious Assistance of the Spirit of God, Psal. 86. 18. Natural Conscience may put us upon Duty, but gives no strength to perform it in a right manner, nor worketh any Love or Delight in the Heart to it; but the Spirit of God helpeth our Infirmities, and teaches us to pray as we ought, Rom. 8. 26, 27. He is therefore call'd the Spirit of *Grace and Supplication*, Zech. 12. 10. Now the Spirit helpeth to pray two ways; (1.) By bestowing the Gift of Prayer, whereby a Person is enabled, on a sudden, to form the Conceptions of his Mind, and Desires of his Heart, in apt words before the Lord; but this Gift of Prayer may be where the Grace of Prayer is not. But unto the latter (the Spirit of Prayer) two things are requir'd: 1. Habitual Grace, infus'd by the Holy Ghost, to sanctify the Person that prays. 2. Actual Grace, to actuate and assist him in pouring forth his Requests before the Lord. The Spirit of God doth this many ways: (1.) In framing right Apprehensions in us of God, of our selves, of our Sins, and of our Wants. (2.) He quickens our Affections. (3.) Regulates and directs our Desires. (4.) Excites the Graces requisite to this Duty; Repentance, Faith, and an humble holy Confidence in God. (5.) Furnisheth the Soul with Arguments to plead with God; from his own Goodness, his gracious Promises and Covenant,

venant, Christ's Merits and Mediation, &c. So that a regenerate Person yet needs in Prayer the Help and Assistance of the Spirit of God: beg his Assistance therefore, when you are ingaging in this Duty. He is appointed by the Father and the Son to help us in this sweet and comfortable Service, that so we may make our Addreses to the Father, thro the Son, by the Spirit, *Eph. 2. 18.* looking unto him for Pardon, Assistance and Acceptance thro the *Merits* of Christ.

4. Consider the Mercies we are to beg are very great, and such as we extremely need; and therefore stir up your Heart to Sincerity and Fervency, that we be not like those of whom God complains, *Isa. 29. 13.* that they drew nigh to him with their Lips, but their Hearts were far from him.

I come next to shew what ought to be the *Matter* of our Prayer.

That it ought to be fram'd and suted according to the several Parts of Prayer, *viz. Confession, Petition, Intercession, and Thanksgiving.* Spiritual Blessings, and such as appertain to the Welfare of the Soul, ought primarily to be sought, and with the greatest Earnestness. Temporal Blessings, and such things as appertain to this Life, ought to be beg'd with Resignation to God, and an humble Submission to his infinite Wisdom and holy Will, *1 John 5. 14.*

For the manner of Prayer, take these Directions:

I. Cast thy self humbly on the Assistance of the holy Spirit of God. No Sacrifice was to be offer'd up with common Fire: without the Spirit we are not able to pray in an acceptable manner to God; therefore we are exhorted to pray *in the Spirit*, *Eph. 6. 18.* and *Jude 20.* *praying in the Holy Ghost*, i.e. in the Assistance, and by the help of the *Holy Ghost*.

II. Labour to be seriously *intentional*, and to pray with *Understanding*, offering thereby to God a rational and reasonable Service. Labour to conceive a right of God, and of his glorious Excellencies, and your own Vileness and Unworthiness: without such Apprehensions of God, we shall be apt to dishonour him. All true Worship is founded in right Thoughts of God: when we come to present our selves before the Great Majesty of Heaven and Earth, we should clothe our Desires in such humble

humble Expressions, as may testify the Awe and Dread of our Hearts. A due Consideration of God's Goodness and Greatness, will be an especial means to preserve in us a blessed Mixture of humble *Confidence*, and *Reverence*, of *Faith*, and *Fear*.

III. Endeavour to pray with true *Humility*, *Contrition*, and *Abhorrence* of thy *Sins*, and a deep Sense and Feeling of thy Wants and Necessities. Give Glory to God, by confessing thy Sins; and abhor thy self before him, in the Consideration of thy great Guiltiness. So *Abraham* did, Gen. 18. 27. *Behold, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, who am but Dust and Ashes.* So *Job* 42. 5, 6. *Now my Eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor my self, and repent in Dust and Ashes.*

IV. Pray in *Faith*, Jam. 1. 6. let us ask in *Faith*, nothing wavering.

1. Act *Faith* on Christ's Mediation and Intercession; not barely mentioning his Name, but depending on his *Merits* and *Mediation*; 1 Tim. 2. 5. The exercising of *Faith* on Christ, as *Mediator*, is a special means of sanctifying God's Name in our Addresses to him. The *Altar* sanctifies the Gift; Christ is the *Altar*, upon which all our spiritual Sacrifices are to be offer'd.

2. Exercise *Faith* on God's *Attributes*, as has been before mention'd, viz. his *Wisdom*, his *Power*, his *Goodness*, his *Mercy*, his *Faithfulness*. Acts of Trust and Dependence are ingaging; the way to get God's Attributes set on work for our good, is to glorify them, by our dependence on them; Prov. 16. 3. *Commit thy Works unto the Lord, and thy Thoughts shall be establish'd.*

3. Act *Faith* on the *Promises* of God, which he hath graciously made, to encourage us to trust in him; Psal. 119. 49. *Remember thy Word unto thy Servant, upon which thou hast caus'd me to hope.*

4. On Christ's *Offices*, his *Priestly*, *Prophetical*, and *Kingly*: all which may afford great Encouragement to our *Faith*. *Faith* is a Grace that exceedingly honours God, for it looks for all, and receives all from him; therefore it is not so much a Christian's Prayer, as his *Faith* in Prayer that God looks at; Mat. 9. 22. *Thy Faith hath made thee whole.* So the Woman of *Canaan*, Mat. 15. 28. *O Woman! great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* Now where *Faith* is thus acted, we pray in *Faith*. And,

(1.) Such

(1.) Such are usually serene and calm after Prayer, as *Hannah* was, *1 Sam.* 18.

(2.) They hold on praying, till God defers to answer, *Luke* 18. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. *1 Thess.* 5. 17. *Pray without ceasing*, *Eph.* 6. 18. which God may do for gracious Ends.

(3.) They prescribe not to God Time, nor Manner, but submit all to his infinite Wisdom; they limit not the Holy One of *Israel*.

(4.) They make Conscience to use lawful Means, but rely on God to bless the Means, and make them effectual.

V. Labour to pray with Uprightness and Sincerity of Heart; *Psal.* 66. 18. *If I regard Iniquity in my Heart, the Lord will not hear me.* See that thy inward Affections be answerable to thy outward Expressions; beg Grace as heartily as thou beggest Pardon. Let Hypocrisy in Prayer be odious unto thee, as it is to God; *Prov.* 15. 8. *The Sacrifice of the Wicked is Abomination to God, but the Prayer of the Upright is his Delight.* So *Hos.* 7. 14. *The Lord's Eye is a piercing Eye.* Aim sincerely at his Glory in the Mercies you beg, without bye and carnal respects, *James* 4. 3. Prayer that wants a right Aim, does usually want a good Issue.

VI. Pray with Charity, and a Heart fill'd with good Will towards others; yea, even to our very Enemies. *Lift up pure Hands without Wrath*, *1 Tim.* 2. 8. We must, when we come to beg Mercy of God, see that we bring a merciful Heart; and be ready to forgive, when we come to beg Forgiveness of our manifold Sins and Provocations. Thus our Saviour hath taught us to pray, *Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us*; and it's very observable, that he resumes this Petition (of all the rest) to explain, and by a strong reason to inforce, *Mat.* 6. 14, 15. *For if ye forgive Men, &c.* Before we set our selves therefore to this Duty, let us labour to get our Hearts purg'd of all Malice, Wrath, Ill-will, and Desire of Revenge, if there be any such vile Affection stirring in us towards any Person. Let us be heartily willing to forgive those that have done us any Wrong or Injury, and pray for them, for their Repentance and Pardon in Christ, and such a Frame of Heart, that they may please him, and be blessed by him, both here

here and hereafter. This is a good Sign of Grace.

VII. Pray with Zeal and Fervency, with holy and lively Affections. Take heed of Slowness and Customariness, and contenting your selves with Lip-Labour, and the mere Performance of the outward Work; God will not take the Skin for a Sacrifice, *James 5. 16. Jer. 29. 13.* David said, *His Soul follow'd hard after God,* *Psal. 63. 8.* So much as there is of the Heart and Spirit in a Duty, so much there will be of Heat and Fervency (ordinarily.) God is pleas'd with our Importunity; this is held forth in the Parable of a Friend coming to his Friend at midnight to borrow Loaves, *Luke 11. 8.* The Scope of which is, to teach us Importunity in Prayer, and Perseverance therein. Jacob would not let the Angel go, except he blessed him. The Effusion of the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication (whereby strong Cries are made to God) is commonly a comfortable Presage of an approaching Mercy, when we wrestle with the Almighty with strong Arguments, as *Job* speaks, *Job 23. 4.* See *Mal. 1. 8, 14.*

VIII. To Prayer and Supplication we must add Thanksgiving. Be as ready to return Praises for Mercies receiv'd, as to desire those we want; *Phil. 4. 6.* In every thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God. Our Hallelujahs should sound as loud as our Supplications, and we should be as hearty in God's Praises as in our own Requests. Ascribe to God therefore the Glory of all his Mercies, and praise him for all his Benefits, both temporal and spiritual; offering up this Sacrifice of Praise cheerfully and heartily, in and thro the Mediation of Christ, by whom alone our Persons and Services are accepted, *Col. 3. 17.* *Heb. 13. 15.*

To direct and quicken us to this Duty of rendering Praises to the Lord, we should consider,

1. Praise is the return God expects from us, and the Homage he requires, *Psal. 50. 23.* Consider in every Mercy, (1.) The Mercy it self. (2.) The Comfort and Sweetness that may be enjoy'd in the use of it. (3.) The Glory, Honour and Praise that is due for it. The two former God freely gives us, he only reserves the latter as a Tribute and Homage to himself: He requires that we should love him and thank him for his Benefits, and improve

improve them for his Glory and Honour. It's too usual with us to be importunate for Mercies when we want them, and yet to be slow and backward in returning Praises for them when we enjoy them; as is plainly intimated in the *Lepers*, Luke 17. 17, 18. The like unthankful Temper we find in too many others, *Psal.* 106. 21. 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. the reason of which is, that wretched Principle of *Self-Love* that is in us, which makes us look more after our own Good, than the Glory of God: but we must be accountable for the Benefits the Lord bestows upon us, *Mat.* 25. 15, 19. Let us therefore with Thankfulness labour to improve all those Talents as we ought, which our Lord and Master hath entrusted us with, to his Praise.

2. Thankfulness for Mercies, is the way to have those Mercies continu'd, and to obtain more from the Lord. He is usually bountiful to such as he sees thankful, whilst our Ingratitude may provoke him to strip and deprive us of those Mercies he has already given us, *Deut.* 28. 47. or else to curse and blast them to us. It has been observ'd, that a Person is not either a long Possessor, or a quiet Possessor of Mercies, who is not a grateful Acknowledger of them.

3. This Duty of Thankfulness is one of the best ways to mitigate any Sorrows that oppress us, if we can work our Hearts to Thankfulness and Praises for the Mercies that are continu'd to us. Let not the Sense of one Affliction (as with too many it doth) sour the Comfort of a thousand Mercies still continu'd and enjoy'd. To provoke us to Thankfulness,

(1.) Let us compare our Mercies, and the Mercies of others together, so as to look at those beneath us, and not above us: Do not we exceed many Thousands in Mercies, that it may be exceed us in Goodness? When many of God's Children eat the Bread of Affliction, and drink the Water of Adversity, it may be we have plenty of all things.

(2.) Let us consider our own great Sinfulness and Unworthiness, *Gen.* 32. 10. Our Sins are such, and so many, as we do not deserve the least Mercy we enjoy.

(3.) Let us compare our Mercies and Afflictions together, for one Affliction we have had a hundred Mercies. Let us set our Mercies over against our Sufferings, and we shall find the Number greater, and the Sum of our Mercies much larger.

(4.) Con-

(4.) Consider Thankfulness is as imperfect a Grace in us as any, and we are to strive after a greater measure of it. Now frequent praising God, and thanking him, makes us more thankful: as often believing, strengthens Faith; so often acknowledging our Mercies, increases and strengthens the Grace of Thankfulness in us.

(5.) Let us labour to be thankful, because it is a singular means to increase *other Graces* in us; particularly *Love to God*; which will abate, if a lively Sense of Mercies wear off our Spirits: whereas a grateful Sense of them quickens and enlivens our Affections to him, and breeds an high Estimation of him. The Sense of his Kindness and Love are strong Motives to make us love him again. (1.) It works us to Contentation and Quietness of Spirit. Our Murmurings and Discontents arise, when our Eyes are still on our Wants, and not on our Enjoyments; the Catalogue of our Mercies at hand and in our Memories, and the Largeness of them, would tend to make our Hearts quiet and contented, under those Afflictions which the Lord is pleas'd to exercise us with. (2.) To Obedience and Desire of doing much for God. A Desire and Endeavour to love him more, and to honour him more, is the Fruit of a thankful Heart. (3.) Trust and Dependence on God is strengthened by it; Thankfulness keeps alive the Memory of old Mercies, and the Memory of former Mercies and Deliverances out of Straits and Difficulties, encourages the Soul to trust in God still.

IX. Rest not in the Duty done, but, (1.) Unto Prayer join Watchfulness, and expect a gracious Answer and Return of Prayer, *Eph. 6. 18.* (2.) We should be careful to use all good means, for the attaining the Mercies we have pray'd for. (3.) If thro Grace our Hearts have been wrought to a good Temper, and holy Frame in that Duty, let us labour to keep it afterwards, and to preserve those Apprehensions and Affections which we find in our Souls, in that Duty of Prayer: and therefore it's good Advice which one gives, that for some little time after Prayer, we should keep our selves silent and quiet, and not (the next moment as it were) rush into the World again; but more leisurely remove from Prayer, to our worldly Businesses and Occasions.

I come now to lay down some Reasons and Motives, to stir us up to the careful and faithful Performance of this Duty.

1. We have the Example of Christ, and all the Worthies in the Scripture to encourage us, *Luke 9. 18. Heb.*

5. 7. We find all God's People addicted to Prayer.

2. 'Tis an especial part of God's Worship, commanded and enjoin'd by him, and an especial means of honouring him, and exalting his great Name and glorious Attributes; and therefore he hath stil'd himself a God hearing Prayer, *Psal. 65. 2.*

3. 'Tis an especial means of our Communion with God: the Converses of a gracious Soul with God (in secret Prayer more especially) are often very sweet; and the Discoveries that he maketh of himself, and the Communications of his Grace, which he sometimes affords in that Duty, are very comfortable, as the Experience of thousands of gracious Persons can attest.

4. Consider the Profit of Prayer every way; it's a means to obtain Blessings of all sorts, both spiritual and temporal: *Mat. 7. 7. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be open'd unto you.* It is a means appointed of God for procuring Pardon of Sin, and Strength against it, and all needful outward Blessings, and to have them sanctify'd to us. The more fervent and constant any are in Prayer, the less Power Sin is likely to have over them. When *Origen* fell into a grievous Sin, which afterwards he sadly bewail'd, he confess'd he went out that Morning without praying unto God. And it's the Saying of a worthy Divine: "I am persuaded, says he, that many a Sin, and Fall, and Snare might have been prevented, if serious and fervent Prayer to God had not been omitted." The Devil, when he sees the Soul so off its Guard, and so unarm'd, is bolder to assault with his Temptations; therefore our Saviour counsels us, *Mat. 26. 41. that we should watch and pray, that we fall not into Temptation.* And then for temporal things, we cannot expect to have any thing sanctify'd to us, and truly blessed, whilst we neglect this Duty. If any object, that God knows our Wants before we ask; let them consider, he requires we should be sensible of them, that we may see and feel our need of his Mercy, that we may

may prize it, and set a higher Value on it. Thus we find it was with *David*, and others recorded in Scripture; *Psal.* 28. 1, 2, 6, 7, & *Psal.* 143. 1, 2, 4, 6. — *IL. Luke* 15. 18, 19. & *Chap.* 18. 13.

(1.) God will be call'd upon, because he will have this Honour given him, that *He is the Author and Giver of every good and perfect Gift*; and therefore in Prayer we glorify his *Attributes*, his *Wisdom*, *Power*, *Goodness*, *Mercy*, and acknowledge our absolute Dependence on him; *Ezek.* 36. 37. *Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of, by the House of Israel, to do it for them.*

(2.) In a right performing of this Duty, our Graces are exercis'd, excited and increas'd; as Repentance, Humiliation, Faith, Love to God, Love to the Children of God; yea, to our very Enemies; Thankfulness, &c. And God is much delighted in the Workings and Breathings of his own Spirit; and in this way he usually communicates his Favour and Grace, and all needful good things to them that *diligently seek him*: so that we may say with the Psalmist, *Psal.* 73. 28. *It is good for us to draw nigh to God.* These holy and humble Approaches to God, are exceedingly for our Good and Benefit; therefore whoever neglects this Duty, is an Enemy to his own Soul, and an Obstructor of his own Happiness.

Obj. I shall close what hath been said, concerning this great Duty, with answering an Objection, which some serious Christians possibly may make; *viz.* That they find that Indisposition, Deadness and Dulness sometimes when they are setting about it, that is discouraging; and they fear coming in such a Frame into the Presence of a Holy God.

Ans. The Duty is ours, and the Command indefinite, that we should perform it *constantly*, and *without ceasing*; and in the conscientious setting about and performance of it, with the best of our Power and Strength, we must look up and wait for the gracious Aid and Assistance of the Holy Spirit. It's the Advice of an eminent Christian, in respect to every Duty, *Dr. Hales*, and our whole Carriage and Deportment towards God, to endeavour to perform what he requires of us as a Duty, when (to our own Apprehension) we do not feel we can do it from a Habit of Grace; *viz.* to believe, as it is a Duty, when we think we cannot get Faith

418 Of Reading the Holy Scriptures.

Faith as a Grace; to repent, as it is a Duty, even while we fear we have not the Grace of Repentance: So also to serve and love God, and to be faithful to him in setting our selves to this Duty of Prayer, as that which he hath so strictly injoin'd; tho we find not those gracious Workings and Breathings of our Souls after him, which we should desire, and which would make the Duty more delightful to us; that he may still find us in the way of our Duty, and then we may expect to find him in a way of Grace and Mercy towards us. And accordingly this has been the Experience (as there's reason to believe) of many serious and excellent Christians, that have thus kept waiting upon God in this Duty, (in particular) notwithstanding the before-mention'd Discouragements; and have (before the Duty was over) found those Inlargements and Breathings of holy Affections, that have made the Duty very refreshing and comforting to them.

CHAP. V.

Of Reading the Holy Scriptures.

THE next thing I am to advise you to, is a conscientious and diligent exercising your selves in reading the Holy Scripture, the Word of God; the written Word, by which we understand the Writings of the Prophets and Apostles, and other holy Men, contain'd in the Old and New Testaments, of which the Apostle speaks, 2 Cor. 2:17. Eph. 6:17, &c. The Lord hath appointed the Scriptures as a Means to convey the Knowledge of himself to our Spirits, as a Means to conform us to his own Divine Nature. It was greatly commendable in Timothy, that he had known the Holy Scriptures from a Child: Make this Example your Copy to write after, acquaint your selves with them betimes, and give up your selves much to the Reading and Study of them. It was unto David, he says, above thousands of Gold and Silver. That Knowledge you will gather from thence, will be the only profitable and delightful Knowledge in the close, and sweeter at last than

than at first; therefore beware of being impos'd upon by any means, to cause you to neglect them, or to undervalue and set light by them. See that you not only now and then gain some time from your vacant Hours (which yet you should endeavour so to improve) but that you read them daily at set times, and when alone in your Closet, as well as in the Family; ordinarily, before Prayer; that by a constant Course of reading and meditating in the Scriptures, you may treasure them up in your Heart, and make them your Counsellors and Directors at all times, that you may not sin against God (as holy David did) *Psal. 119. 17.* In treating hereof, I shall,

First, Endeavour to shew what clear and sufficient Evidence there is, that the Holy Scripture is God's Word, and written by the Inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, What are the Duties incumbent on all that profess the Scriptures to be of Divine Authority.

First, I shall shew, that there is sufficient Evidence to prove the Holy Scriptures, to be the Word of God. Some Divines speak of a threefold Principle of that Faith, whereby They are believ'd to be the Word of God. (1.) Tradition; and the Testimony of good Men in all Ages, that are worthy to be believ'd, and also the Testimony of the Church, by which People are at first taught, that the Scripture is from God; and in this sense, the Church is call'd the Pillar or Ground of Truth, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* because it holds forth, and makes known God's Truth to others, as Pillars do the Laws and Edicts of Magistrates (that are fasten'd to them) that they may be known of all Men. The Church is a Ground and Pillar to set this Light upon, and to hold it out to the World. But this is but a human Testimony, and so fallible; and therefore those that are induc'd to believe it at first from thence, yet afterwards come to see greater Evidence than this for their Belief of it.

(2.) We have an argumentative Principle, whereby such strong Reasons are presented to the Understanding, as may satisfy unbiass'd Men that the Scripture is the Word of God. And,

(3.) The innate and self-evidencing Light of the Scripture it self; those innate Keisness, Characters and Marks of Divinity, that plainly appear therein, and evidence it

420 *Of Reading the Holy Scriptures.*

to come from God. And this will appear more plainly, if we consider,

I. The *Excellency* of the *Doctrine* it teaches. The things it proposes to us to believe and embrace, are most worthy of the Truth, Wisdom, and Goodness of God: it teaches us to know God aright; to know our selves, and our Guiltiness before God; to know Christ, and the way of *Reconciliation* with God, in and by him; the Nature of true Blessedness, and how we may attain it. Who but God could teach us what his own Nature is, and how he will be worship'd; and reveal this new and living way of Salvation for fallen Sinners, by Faith in his Son's Blood? It's He only could reveal it, whose infinite Wisdom had first contriv'd it.

II. The *Excellency* of its *Precepts*. Waters discover the Excellency of the *Spring* that sends them forth: the Scripture enjoins Holiness with the greatest strictness; Faith and Piety towards God, Righteousness and Charity towards Men, Sobriety and Temperance in the government of our selves: these are the Precepts it enjoins most indispensibly, all which have a potent tendency to promote real Goodness in the World. There are three things wherein the Precepts of the Scripture differ from the Precepts of any Law-giver whatsoever. (1.) In the *Extensiveness* of them: What Prince ever gave Laws to all Mankind? But the Scripture-Commands are given to all the Children of Men, and bind all that have reasonable Souls. (2.) In the *Spiritualness* of them: those Laws bind the Heart and secretest Thoughts, which human Laws cannot do. (3.) In the *Purity* of them: more pure and unstain'd Perfection cannot be conceiv'd, than is prescrib'd in the *Law of God*. The Heathens by their very Religion were led into many Abominations; but none can be wicked that is a Christian, except he be a *Hypocrite*; and only a Pretender to Christianity. Faith, Holiness, sincere Obedience, Purity of Heart and Life, Uprightness of Conversation, Mortification, Self-denial, forgiving Injuries, doing Good against Evil; and in a word, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; these are the Precepts of this blessed Book, and in which all Wickedness is condemn'd. The *Spirituality* and unstain'd *Purity* which appears in the Scriptures, and the Precepts

Precepts contain'd in them, is an undeniable Proof (if there had been no other) of their *divine* Original: for if they had been of Man, it cannot be conceiv'd a wicked Impostor should have fram'd them, so directly contrary to that Interest of Satan which he appears so plainly and avowedly to be carrying on and promoting. And no good Man, who desir'd to promote true Religion and Holiness, which the whole Current of that sacred Book of the Scriptures have a manifest tendency unto, durst assert them to be of divine Original, and that the Lord himself was the Author of them (saying, *thus saith the Lord*) if they were only human, and not written by the *Inspiration* of his *Holy Spirit*.

III. The *Excellency* of the *Recompences* and *Rewards* it promises to the Obedient, even eternal Life and Happiness. The Scripture proposes not to us (to encourage us to Obedience) a *Turkish* Paradise, and the gratifying a vicious and sensual Appetite, but Pleasures at God's right Hand for evermore, *Psal. 16. 11. an heavenly Kingdom that cannot be moved, an Inheritance incorruptible that fadeth not away, a Crown of Righteousness, and an exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory*, which God can only bestow: so likewise the Dreadfulness of those Punishments that are threatned against the Disobedient, do aloud proclaim the Scriptures to be from God.

IV. The Majesty of the Style, the Authoritativeness, and God-like manner of speaking, that is discernible in the Scriptures. How often do we meet with such authoritative Passages as these: *Thus saith the Lord. Hear the Word of the Lord, Exod. 3. 14. And God said unto Moses, I am that I am. And he said, Thus shalt thou say to the Children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.* What a commanding Passage is that, *Mat. 13. 9. Who hath Ears to hear, let him hear?* And with how much Majesty and Authority are many other Sayings and Passages of the Scriptures deliver'd? as *Hos. 4. 17. 1 Cor. 14. 38. Rev. 22. 11. Luke 12. 4, 5. Mat. 10. 28, &c.*

V. The *Heights* and *Depths* of *Wisdom* therein discover'd: there are some Revelations in it so sublime and mysterious, that Reason could never have found out. Indeed the wise Providence of God hath so contriv'd the Scriptures, that the things necessary to Salvation are plain and obvious, that mean Capacities may reach and

understand them; but as God is said to dwell in Light, 1 Tim. 6. 16. and elsewhere, to dwell in thick Darkness, 1 Kings 8. 12. so there are Shallows in the Scripture, things plain and easy to be understood, and there are Depths, things mysterious and profound. Here a Lamb may wade, and an Elephant may swim: there is Milk for Babes, and Meat for strong Men. By making things that are necessary plain and easy, God hath provided for the weaker Capacities of Men; and by inserting many Difficulties and obscure Passages, he hath provided against the Contempt of his Word. He hath made all necessary things easy to be understood, and things more difficult he hath made not necessary.

VI. Consider the Scope of the Whole, which is to give all Glory to God; Eccles. 12. 13. & 1 Cor. 10. 31. to plant such a Knowledge of God's Nature and Will in us, as may induce and incline us to honour him and worship him aright; to love him, and conform our selves to him, to imitate him and his divine Excellencies, who is the absolute Pattern of Perfection. It teaches us such a way of Salvation, as cuts off all matter of boasting and glorying from Man, and exalts his free and glorious Grace alone.

VII. Consider the Seals of divine Authority annex'd to the Scriptures.

(1.) The Spirit of Prophecy, which foretold such future things, as are beyond the Skill of Nature or Art to foresee. Hereby the Prophet Isaiah demonstrated the Vanity of the Heathen Idols; Declare things to come (says he) that we may know ye are Gods, Isa. 41. 22. Jer. 28. 9. The Lord reveals the things which he will bring to pass in the Generations to come. This Spirit appears to be both in the Prophets in the Old Testament, and in Christ and his Apostles in the New. As the Name and Birth of Josiah was foretold 300 Years before it came to pass, 1 Kings 13. 2. so the Name and Birth of Cyrus, and his Performances, Ezra 1. 1. Isa. 45. 1. Old Jacob foretells the respective Fates of all his Children, and their Posterity. David in Psal. 22. and the Prophet Isaiah, speak as distinctly and particularly of Christ, as if they had seen with their eyes what happened to him. So Daniel describes the great Revolutions of the succeeding Monarchies; as if he had written a History rather than

1. Prophecy. So also the Destruction of Jerusalem, the Temple, and scattering of the Jews, how plainly was it predicted, *Mat. 24*? which accordingly came to pass.

2. (2.) The Power of working *Miracles*, such things as are above the power of Nature or Art to do: *Mat. 11. 3, 4, 5. John 3. 2.* God freely attested to the Pemen of the Scriptures by mighty Signs and Wonders, by great and undeniable Miracles, such as are Instances of his immediate Hand and Power; as the Miracles wrought by *Moses*, and afterwards by the *Prophets*, and by our *Saviour* all along the Course of his Ministry before his Passion; which were very famous, and done before Multitudes, and not in a Corner. And can any believe that God would by such great Wonders and Miracles attest to Blasphemy and sacrilegious Impostures? And hence the Doctrines, Covenant of eternal Life, and all that was deliver'd by them, are fully manifested to be from God; and surely if the Scripture had not been of divine Authority, God would some way or other have disown'd it, e'er this, and not so constantly by his Providence have preserv'd it, in spite of the Devil and all his Instruments, who have been so long labouring to banish it out of the World, and to weaken the Authority of it: which wonderful *Preservation* of it, notwithstanding all those Attempts and Endeavours to suppress and destroy it, amounts to little less than a Miracle.

(3.) The *Resurrection* of Jesus Christ, the great Preacher and Author of the Gospel, from the Dead, after he had been three days in the Grave. The Death of Christ put a doubt upon his Doctrine, and stagger'd his Disciples for a time; but when he rose again, all those Doubts vanish'd, and the Gospel gain'd a greater Confirmation thereby, as the Apostle says, *Rom. 1. 4.*

VIII. The wonderful and supernatural *Effects* produc'd by the *Scripture*, evidence it to be of divine *Original*.

(1.) It hath a mighty convincing Power, it searches into the Hearts and Consciences of Men, and discovers their Guilt, and Misery, and Danger to them, in such a clear and convincing manner, that they are forc'd to fall down before it. This *Paul* experienc'd, *Rom. 7. 9. & ver. 7.* Hence *David*, in praising the Law of God, useth such Expressions as he doth, that the *Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul; the Testimony of the Lord is*

424 Of Reading the Holy Scriptures.

sure, making wise the Simple, &c. *Psal.* 19. 7, 8. so in *Psal.* 119. 130.

(2.) It hath a power to terrify the *Conscience*. What the Psalmist says of *Thunder*, may fitly be apply'd to the *Word of God*; *Psal.* 29. 4, 5, 8. The Word of God shakes the Hearts of the proudest Sinners, and makes them tremble like the Leaves of Trees.

(3.) It hath a converting Power, to turn the Heart from Sin to God, *Tu.* 3. 3. a Power over the Spirits and Hearts of Men, to change, renew, and alter them; and this Power the Lord wonderfully exerts by the Scriptures: *Jer.* 23. 29. *Is not my Word like Fire, saith the Lord, and like a Hammer that breaketh the Rock in pieces?* So *Heb.* 4. 12. *For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, &c.* So 2 *Cor.* 10. 4, 5. *Augustine's* Conversion was either wrought or compleated upon his reading *Rom.* 13. 13. which (after an audible Voice, saying, *Take up and read*, and opening the Book at a venture) that place of Scripture first presented it self to his Eye, and the Spirit of God by it wonderfully wrought upon his Heart. And the Efficacy and Power of the Scriptures to this end, many have experienced, and in all Ages have set their Seals to the Truth of it.

(4.) They have a comforting Power, *Rom.* 15. 4. Drooping dejected Spirits that have been almost overwhelmed with Despair, have been wonderfully and strangely revived and comforted by the Scriptures. *Luther* professes, that one place of *St. Paul's* [*Rom.* 1. 17.] was to him the very Gate of Paradise. So holy *Bitney*, the Martyr, professes how much his Heart was cheered and comforted (that before was sadly dejected) by that place, 1 *Tim.* 1. 15. In the Scripture we may find *Physick* for any Disease, *Balm* for any Wound, and a *Salve* for any Sore. Many of the People of God have found themselves strangely revived by reading some place of Scripture, which the Hand of God hath directed them to. The *Martyrs* in *Queen Mary's* days, for their mutual Comfort, used in their Letters to each other to set down those Scriptures that they found tended most to their Consolation and Support; *Psal.* 119. 92. See also *Psal.* 94. 19.

IX. Another Principle of this divine Faith and Belief, that the Scripture is the Word of God, is, the Spirit of God;

God; who by his own inward *Testimony* persuades the Heart to a Belief hereof, 1 *Thess.* 1. 5. As the *Holy Ghost* by special Inspiration was the Author of the Scripture, and by extraordinary Endowments was the Author of the *Miracles* wrought for its Confirmation; so also He is the Author of the *Faith* of every Person that truly and unfeignedly believes it. He inlightens the Understanding (removing the Blindness and Depravedness thereof) and shews us the *Credibility* and *Evidence* there is for the Truth that is to be believ'd, and so persuades the Heart to a Belief of it. We may indeed come to an historical Belief of the Scripture by rational Persuasions, without the special Grace and Illumination of the Spirit of God; but not that deep and firm Belief, which will carry over the Will effectually to God in Christ, and captivate the whole Man to the Obedience of the Truth. And when such a Faith and Belief of the Scripture is wrought in the Soul (attended with *Sanctification*) this confirms the Truth and Excellency of such a Faith and Belief, that it is of God. The Holy Ghost, by his secret and free Illuminations, communicates spiritual Light to the Mind, enabling it to discern the *Truth*, *Majesty*, and *Authority* of the Scripture, removing that perverse Disposition, that Averſation and Enmity to the things of God that is in our corrupt Nature; and persuades the Soul to believe and embrace *that Word*, wherein he himself speaks with Divine Light and Power to the Minds and Conſciences of Men. He beareth witness to the Divinity of the Holy Writ, and to the Truth of his own Testimony, and so puts a final Issue to that Controversy.

Obj. Tho the Scriptures are indeed of divine Authority, as is evident they are, yet some may object that since the Coming of Christ, and the Promulgation of the Gospel, the Scriptures of the Old Testament are not of that use as they were before, but as a Bond cancel'd and out of date.

Ans. That we may not be carry'd away with this wicked Error, let us consider these few Foundations following, taken out of the Scriptures of the New Testament; which confirm and recommend unto us those that are in the Old.

1. Consider that expreſs Saying of the Apostle, *Rom.* 15. 4. *Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written*

written for our Learning, that we thro Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures might have Hope. In which the Apostle refers to a Text out of the Old Testament, tho he might have made use of the like, and those as futable to what he was speaking, out of the New; as *Paracletus* observes. And St. Stephen, speaking of Moses's Writings, says, That Moses receiv'd the lively Oracles to give them to us, Acts 7. 38.

2. Consider what the Apostle says, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16. where he exhorts him to continue in the things which he had learned, from himself or from the Scriptures, in which he had been train'd up from a Child; all these Scriptures being given by Inspiration of God, and being profitable to teach, to reprove, &c. These were evidently the Scriptures of the Old Testament, none of the New Testament being then written. Some of the Epistles were written before any of the Gospels, the first of which was 1 Thess. and yet this was written after Timothy's Childhood, and after Paul had taken Timothy to him. And if these Scriptures were given by Inspiration of God, and if the Holy Men of God, the Prophets, spake and wrote them, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1. 21, and were therefore call'd the Oracles of God: then doubtless there is the same Truth, the same Grace, the same holy and heavenly Doctrine contain'd in them, as in the Scriptures of the New Testament; there being but one Spirit breathing in them both. These therefore cannot be rejected without a rejecting of the Holy Spirit which speaks in them: St. Stephen therefore chargeth the Jews with resisting against the Holy Ghost, and to cast these aside as unprofitable, is no less than Blasphemy against the Spirit of God.

3. Consider that place of the Apostle, Eph. 2. 20. that the Church is built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets; that the New Testament Church is built upon the Foundation of the Prophets, as well as Apostles, excluding neither; nor may we do it. The Apostle makes both of them only one Foundation, and no more, in regard of the Unity of Faith and Doctrine; which is taught by both, the Doctrine of them both leading to that one Foundation, which is Christ. Herein the Scriptures of the Prophets of the Old Testament do fully conspire with the Apostles in the New, and are therefore call'd one Foundation.

4. Observe what our blessed Saviour saith, *Mat. 5. 17. I am not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfil them.* Which Names comprehend all the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*; *Mat. 7. 12.* and therefore they are to continue.

5. Observe the constant Practice of our blessed Saviour in his Doctrine, and of the Evangelists and Apostles in their Preaching and Writings, to make use of the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*; as the *New Testament* gives abundant witness, and is obvious to every one's Observation.

Let us therefore beware of such as seek to withdraw us from any part of the Holy Scriptures; these Spirits are certainly not of God. We have much cause to praise God for the clear Manifestation of the Doctrine of Grace in these days, more than in the former times: they had the same Doctrine, but it's more clear to us than to them; as the Light of the Sun at Noon is the same Light it was when it first shined in the Morning, only more clear and bright than before. See then what way they walk'd in, and let us follow them; this old way is the good way, the End whereof is Life and Peace. *Jo. 1.*

Secondly, We come next to consider the Duties that are incumbent on all that profess to believe the Scriptures to be of Divine Authority.

1. Let us endeavour to be truly sensible what a great mercy it is, that God hath committed his Mind to Writing; that our Faith depends not on uncertain Suggestions and Traditions, but on publick Records, that we have a written Rule, and publick Standard to try all Doctrines by; *Isa. 8. 20. To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.* God himself wrote the first Scripture with his own finger upon Tables of Stone, *Exod. 24. 12.* and commanded and directed Moses and the Prophets to do the same, *Exod. 17. 14. Josh. 23. 6. Luke 16. 29. John 5. 39. & 20. 30, 31. Acts 17. 11.*

2. Let us be very thankful that these Records, this Holy Scripture, is committed to us, and given into our hands: God hath not done so to every Nation. As it was to the Jews a high Privilege and Favour, that to them were committed the Oracles of God, *Rom. 3. 2.* so to have the Scripture given to us, and that in our own Language

428 Of Reading the Holy Scriptures.

(So that all may have the free Use of it) is a great Privilege; *To you is the Word of this Salvation sent*, Acts 13. 26. It's a Token from Heaven sent to us, into whose hands it comes; therefore let us highly value it, prize it, and be very thankful for it.

113. We ought to be diligent and conscientious Readers of it. To engage us the more to this Duty, consider,

(1.) 'Tis a Duty injoin'd on all Persons (none excepted) on Magistrates, Ministers, and People; *Deut. 17. 18, 19, 20.* the Command being enforc'd by a general Reason, that has a binding force on all; which is, *That he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the Words of this Law, and these Statutes to do them.* On the same account that the King was to read it, all the People were to be gather'd together to hear it read, *Deut. 31. 11, 12, 13.* It's injoin'd to Ministers, *1 Tim. 4. 13. Titus 1. 9.* and 'tis a Duty commanded the People of God generally, *Mal. 4. 4.* Christ commands the Jews in general to *search the Scriptures*, *John 5. 39.* And the Apostle gives, in his name, this Counsel and Command to all Christians, *Col. 3. 16. Let the Word of Christ dwell richly in you.*

(2.) As this Duty is commanded, so we find it commended to us by the Practice of the Saints and People of God. How did David exercise himself in the Word? And how was his Heart affected with it? as appears by his own Expressions, *Psal. 119. 24. Thy Testimonies are my Delight and my Counsellors. Ver. 72. The Law of thy Mouth is better to me than thousands of Gold and Silver. And ver. 97. O how love I thy Law, it is my Meditation all the day!* And yet (if we observe it) how little had David of the Scripture, in comparison of what we have! It's not probable he had more than the *Pentateuch*, the Books of *Job, Joshua, Judges, and Ruth.* The Bereans were commended for searching the Scriptures daily, *Acts 17. 11.* And the Apostle Paul sets it down for Timothy's Commendation, that *from a Child he had known the holy Scriptures.*

(3.) The Scripture is very useful for all, and the Matters contain'd in them concern all Persons whatsoever. It's urg'd by God as a great Aggravation of *Israel's Sin*, *Hos. 8. 12. I have written to him the great things of my Law, but they were counted as a strange thing.* The Scripture is given to us as our *Rule of Faith and Life*, its main

main tendency being to make us wise unto Salvation: it's profitable for all things tending to the Glory of God, and our own spiritual and eternal Happiness; it discovereth our Misery by Sin, together with the perfect Remedy; it propoundeth perfect Happiness to us, and affordeth Means to work it out, in and for us, *Rom. 3. 23, 24.* thro the Holy Spirit of Grace co-operating with it. It is the immortal Seed to beget Sinners to Christ, and it is the only Milk and stronger Meat to nourish us up in him. It is the only Soul-Physick to recover us, and to free us from all spiritual Evils; by it Christ gives spiritual Sight to the Blind, Hearing to the Deaf, Speech to the Dumb, Health to the Sick, Life to the Dead; in brief, there is not a Condition into which a Child of God can fall, but there is a Direction and Rule in the Word, in some measure suitable thereunto. This Book of God contains those many rich Legacies bequeath'd to us in that last Will and Testament which he hath deliver'd to us, sealed with the Blood of Jesus Christ. It is the Book of the Privileges of God's Children, the *Magna Charta* and Statute-Book of Heaven; the Word of his Grace, which is able to build us up, and to give us an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified; *Acts 20. 32.* And farther, let it be consider'd, that we shall be judg'd according to the things contain'd in the Scriptures; and therefore the Knowledge thereof must needs be of great concernment to all Persons.

Now I shall lay down some *Directions* how we should read the Scriptures.

1. Let us labour to work our Hearts to a high and reverent Esteem of the Word. When we go to read it, we should read it as a Letter written by the Hand of God. If an Angel should bring us a Letter from Heaven, how highly should we prize it and regard it! The Bible is a Message sent from Heaven, to acquaint us with the Mind and holy Will of God. Let us therefore receive it not as the Word of Man, but as it is in truth the Word of God; *Isa. 8. 20.* Let us read it with Reverence and due Regard, and diligently observe and mark what God speaks to us therein.

2. Beg the Spirit of God (that indicted the Scripture, that inspir'd and infallibly guided the Penmen thereof) to open your Eyes, that you may see the wondrous things

430 *Of Reading the Holy Scriptures.*

confronted therein; Psal. 119. 18. Beg of God to give you his Holy Spirit (which he hath promised to give to them that ask him, Luke 11. 13.) to enlighten your Mind, and to incline your Heart to a full Persuasion and Belief of the Truth and divine Authority thereof, and that it may make a deep and abiding Impression upon your Heart, thro his Holy Spirit co-operating therewith; and to bring over your Will to a sincere Obedience and Compliance with the Will of God, manifested and revealed therein.

3. Meditate on the Word; Psal. 119. 99. It's made the Mark and Character of a blessed Man, to meditate in the Law of God; Psal. 1. 2. Let his labour to get our Hearts affected with what we read. It's said of one, that in reading the Scripture he ty'd not himself to any number of Chapters, but would read on till he found his Heart affected with somewhat that he met withal.

4. Labour to work your Heart to a firm Belief, that all things necessary to Man's Salvation, and that concern his Faith and Practice, are either expressly set down in the Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduc'd therefrom: unto which nothing is at any time to be added, either by new Revelations or Traditions of Men; the Scriptures being a perfect Canon, a perfect Rule of Faith and Life.

5. Compare one Scripture with another, which is the directest way to come to a right understanding of the Scriptures; and those that are of honest and humble Minds, do usually find satisfaction in this counsel. The "Scripture (saith *Camero*) is so penned, that they that have a mind to know, may know; they that have a mind to wrangle, may take occasion; and justly perish by the Rebellion of their own Reason." And *Jerulian* says, to this effect, "That God hath so disposed the Scriptures, that they that are stubborn and perverse, and will not be satisfy'd, might be harden'd." This Word is spiritual, containing the secret and hidden things of God in a Mystery, which is as a Book seal'd up, *Isa.* 29. 11, 12. (as to the discovery and spiritual discerning of the things of God in it) to all that have not the help of God's Spirit; without which, none can know the inward and spiritual Meaning of it powerfully and savingly. Resolve to obey whatever you know to be the Will of God; If any Man will do his Will, our blessed

Blessed Lord hath told us, *he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.*

6. Get a clear Knowledge of the *first Principles* of Religion, believe them stedfastly, and endeavour to frame your Life according to those more easy, and known Scriptures, wherein these Principles and *first Oracles* of God are contain'd; *Psal. 119. 130.*

7. Let us remember that the *Holy Spirit* of God, speaking in and by the Scripture, is the great and supreme Judge, by which all Controversies of Religion are to be try'd; all the Decrees of Councils, Opinions of antient Writers, Doctrines of Men, and private Spirits, and whatever is brought under the name of spiritual Truth, are to be examin'd; and in whose Sentence we are to rest. Being brought to this Standard, if they speak not according to it, and agree with it, we are to reject them, as *having no Truth in them*, *Isa. 8. 20.* All Scripture being of divine Inspiration, and holy Men of God speaking therein as they were mov'd by the Holy Ghost; such a Standard and Rule is of singular use to direct us in all Matters of Faith and Worship, and all spiritual things: it is the *Word of the Spirit*, that we are to take and make use of against the Wiles of the Devil, and whereby we may know the Voice of God from that of Satan, when he transforms himself into an Angel of Light. And tho' there be many things in the Scripture that seem contrary to, and to thwart each other, yet upon due search they will be found reconcilable, and the Contrariety to be only seeming, and not real. Thus much as to the Scriptures, indicted immediately by the Holy Spirit, and therefore of Divine Authority. But then,

In reading Mens Writings;

1. Read the best, and those by which you can experience you profit most and reap the most spiritual Benefit.

2. Read a good Book thorowly, and with due Consideration. It was the Experience of a serious and pious Christian (now in Glory) that tho' in reading a good Book once through, she was little affected, and not sensible she receiv'd any benefit by it; yet reading the same Book presently after over again, it pleas'd the Lord to make it very useful to her, and she experienc'd much spiritual good and advantage from it.

3. Reject not hastily any thing you read, because of the mean Opinion you have of the *Author*; neither believe every thing you read, because of the great Opinion you have of him that wrote it: but try all things by the Scriptures, *Mat. 22. 29, 31.* Receive nothing upon the bare Testimony or Judgment of any Man, any farther than he can confirm it by the Canon of the *Word*, that it agrees thereto; or else (being agreeable with the Scripture) appears evidently so by Reason or undoubted Experience: If the Meanest, speak according thereto, receive and regard it; but if the most Judicious in your Esteem, yea, if he were an *Angel from Heaven*, should speak or write otherwise, refuse and reject it.

C H A P. VI.

Of Living continually as in the Sight of God.

LIVE always as under the Eye of God, as in his Sight and Presence, being careful to approve your Heart, and all your Ways unto him. Remember his pure and holy Eye is always fix'd upon you, and we can neither do, speak, nor think any thing out of his Sight and Knowledge; but all things are naked and open unto the Eyes of him with whom we have to do: He compasseth our Paths, and our lying down, and is acquainted with all our ways; *Heb. 4. 13. Psal. 139. 3.* All our Principles we act from, all the Projects and Contrivances that we are forging in our Minds, and what our Ends are that we aim at in all we undertake or set our selves about; he sees and observes them, and they should therefore be carefully heeded and observ'd by us. It was the Saying of one, *He that sees not God every where, sees him no where.* That is pure Religion, that eyes God rather than Man, wherever we are; and therefore in all our Actions, whether natural, moral, or spiritual, be careful still to delign the Glory of God.

1. In *Natural Acts*, labour to have *supernatural Aims and Ends*; *1 Cor. 10. 31. Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*

2. In

2. In *Civil Acts*, such as the discharge of relative Duties; be careful so to walk, as designing God may be glorify'd by your Faithfulness: for so the Apostle adviseth, *Eph. 6. 6, 7. Tit. 2. 9, 10.* to perform all our Duties as the Servants of Christ, and unto him faithfully, that we may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

3. In *Spiritual Acts*; such as praying, praising God, and worshipping of him; be especially careful that your Aims be spiritual: *Do you fast unto me, even to me?* The Lord says, by the Prophet, *Zech. 7. 5.* he makes no account of any of our Acts of Piety, or religious Services, except we aim at his Glory in them. What an excellent Frame of Spirit was there in holy David? who professeth, *Psal. 16. 8. I have set the Lord always before me.* Did we but keep this one common Principle warm upon our Hearts, that [GOD SEES] how would it keep us sincere and upright? How would it deter us from Heart-Sins, and the closest Hypocrisy, and from warping into any sinful Practice? This was that which kept Joseph so upright; *Gen. 39. 9. How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* Ask thy self therefore often this Question [Will this be pleasing to God that I am now going about?] If Credit or Shame will restrain us from Sin, as it sometimes doth, how much more should God's Eye? Nothing more feeds, maintains and preserves Piety, than a constant Awe of God; therefore it's said (as I remember) of holy Mr. Dodd, that he would often be putting these three Questions to himself, *Whose am I? Where am I? What am I doing?* David gives the reason the Wicked are so bad, *They have not set God before them, Psal. 86. 14. God is not in all their Thoughts, Psal. 10. 4.* Abraham was afraid of himself in Gerar, *Gen. 20. 11.* and what was the reason? Why, says he, *The Fear of God is not in this Place.* I have heard of one, who being tempted to Leudness, desir'd Privacy, and suspecting to obtain it in one Room, desir'd to remove into another more private, and from thence to another; and when at the last she was brought into a Room where no Eye of Man could possibly behold them, she was still restrain'd from that Act of Uncleaness, upon this awful Consideration, that the Eye of God still was upon them. And there is reason to believe, that Men durst not sin against God so impudently as they do, if they really

434 *Of living as in the sight of God.*

thought he saw them, and would call them to an account.

The *Fear* of God is a Grace of continual use; if that be not before our Eyes, we are exceeding apt to grow careless and secure. We cannot be always praying unto God, nor praising of him, nor worshipping of him, nor employ'd in Acts of special Communion with him; yet we ought to be always in his *Fear*, and to remember that we are always under his Eye. *Be thou in the Fear of the Lord all the Day long*, Prov. 23. 17. Right Thoughts of God are the Fewel that maintains the Life of Religion, which otherwise would soon be extinguish'd. Remember always God's *Omnipresence*, and that will be a means to make thee upright, and careful to approve thy Heart and Ways unto him. Sincerity is the Life of all our Graces, and puts Life into all our Duties: Faith unfeign'd, Love without Dissimulation, a plain Spirit in which is no Guile; these are God's *Delight*.

The clearer therefore we stand in our own Thoughts concerning the Uprightness and Singleness of our Heart, in the Tenure of our Christian Course, incomparably the more Joy and Comfort we shall have. *Let Integrity and Uprightness preserve me*, was David's Prayer, Psal. 25. 21. Keep thy Integrity, and thy Integrity will keep thee. A good Man, next to his Care that he gives not God any occasion against him, will take care that he gives not his Conscience any occasion against him, any just occasion to reproach and rebuke him. Conscience is God's Magistrate and Vicegerent within, that is appointed to be a Terror, not to good Works, but to the evil; would we then not be afraid of this Power, *Do that which is Good, and we shall have Praise of the same*; to allude to that, Rom. 13. O it is exceeding sweet (none knows how sweet but he that hath it) to have the Testimony of a good Conscience, upon good Grounds. A good Conscience is the best Pillow to sleep upon, and, as one says, the best Dish to feed upon; nay, it is a Feast, a continual Feast, Prov. 15. 15. on which we may be daily feeding, and it will be matter of great Comfort and Support to us both in Life and at Death: as the *Author* of the *Practice of Piety* writeth, speaking of a good Conscience;

Look

Look well to your selves what Conscience you have,
For Conscience will damn, and Conscience will save.

C H A P. VII.

Of Living by Faith.

LABOUR to live by Faith at all times, and in every State and Condition you are in, or shall by the Providence of God be brought into. Live in the daily Exercise of this Grace of Faith, for it is not only the Duty, but the exceeding great Privilege of a Believer, so to live; *Gal. 2. 20.*

Having given up and committed your Souls penitently and believingly into the hands of Christ, to have your Pardon and Peace procur'd thro' his Merits and Intercession, having given up your selves wholly to him, with all that you have and are; and (according to the Tenour of his gracious Covenant) receiv'd and embrac'd him, in all those Offices which he hath graciously undertaken to exercise for the Good of his People; and in all those Relations which he stands in to them, wherein he hath promis'd to be *All in All*, in and unto you: let it be your daily Care so to walk in him; *Col. 2. 6.* Learn daily to trust and depend on the Goodness of God in Christ, and his gracious Promises, for a Supply of all such Blessings, both Spiritual and Temporal, as you stand in need of.

I. Seek unto the Lord, and daily trust and depend on him for the continual Aid and Assistance of his Holy Spirit, for Grace and Strength effectually to enable you to subdue your Corruptions, and to mortify in you all sinful and vile Affections. For your Warrant and Encouragement hereunto, see and apply believingly the following Scriptures.

Luke 11. 9. Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be open'd unto you.

Ver. 10. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be open'd.

Ver. 11. If a Son shall ask Bread of any of you that is a Father, will he give him a Stone? or if he ask a Fish, will he for a Fish give him a Serpent?

Ver. 12. Or if he ask an Egg, will he offer him a Scorpion?

Ver. 13. If ye then being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

2 Cor. 12. 9. My Grace is sufficient for thee; for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness: most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my Infirmities, that the Power of Christ may rest upon me.

Rom. 6. 14. For Sin shall not have Dominion over you, for ye are not under the Law, but under Grace.

II. Trust in him, to enable you to resist and overcome the Temptations wherewith you may at any time be assaulted from the Devil or the World. See and apply,

Mat. 6. 13. Lead us not into Temptation.

1 Pet. 5. 8. Be sober, be vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Ver. 9. Whom resist, stedfast in the Faith.

James 4. 7. Resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.

1 John 2. 15. Love not the World, nor the things that are in the World; if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.

1 John 5. 4. Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World; and this is the Victory that overcometh the World, even our Faith.

John 17. 15. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the World, but that thou shouldst keep them from the Evil.

Ver. 20. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me thro their Word. See also, 2 Chron. 32. 31.

III. Humbly depend on him to assist and enable you to perform all the Duties both of your general and particular Calling, with Sincerity, Diligence and Delight.

2 Cor. 3. 5. Not that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing as of our selves, but our Sufficiency is of God.

Phil. 4. 13. I can do all things thro Christ that strengthens me.

IV. Trust

IV. Trust in him, to enable you to bear all the Afflictions that he shall please to lay upon you, with Patience, Affiance in his Mercy, and Submission to his Will.

Col. 1. 11. Strengthen'd with all Might, according to his glorious Power, unto all Patience and Long-suffering with Joyfulness.

1 Cor. 10. 13. There hath no Temptation taken you, but such as is common to Man; but God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but with the Temptation will also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Rom. 5. 3. But we glory in Tribulations also, knowing that Tribulation worketh Patience.

Rev. 13. 10. Here is the Patience and the Faith of the Saints.

V. As we must continually depend on God for a Supply of all those Graces and Comforts our Souls stand in need of; so likewise we must depend daily on his fatherly Care, to be furnish'd and supply'd with all such outward Mercies, as he sees needful for us in this Life.

Mat. 6. 11. Give us this Day our daily Bread.

Psal. 84. 11. For the Lord God is a Sun and a Shield, the Lord will give Grace and Glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

1 Tim. 4. 8. But Godliness is profitable to all things, having the Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.

2 Pet. 1. 3. According as his Divine Power hath given us all things that pertain unto Life and Godliness, thro the Knowledge of him, that hath call'd us to Knowledge and Virtue.

VI. Humbly depend on him for Direction and Guidance in all your lawful ways, and to be counsel'd in difficult Cases, and Matters of great Concernment to you.

Prov. 3. 5. Trust in the Lord with all thy Heart, and lean not to thine own Understanding.

Ver. 6. In all thy ways acknowledg him, and he shall direct thy Paths.

Isa. 30. 21. And thine Ears shall hear a Word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right Hand, and when ye turn to the left.

Psal. 55. 22. Cast thy Burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the Righteous to be mov'd.

Jer. 10. 23. O Lord, I know that the way of Man is not in himself; it is not in Man that walketh, to direct his Steps.

Prov. 16. 9. A Man's Heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his Steps.

Psal. 32. 8. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine Eye.

Psal. 17. 5. Hold up my Goings in thy Paths, that my Footsteps slip not.

Psal. 73. 24. Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterward receive me to Glory.

James 1. 5. If any of you lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all Men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him.

Ver. 6. But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering, &c.

VII. Daily trust in him to be protected and preserv'd from Dangers, and all Evils, and Mischiefs (as far forth as he shall see it good for you) and that his holy Angels may have charge over you, and may perform all those good Offices for you, which he hath appointed them to do, for those who shall be Heirs of Salvation.

Heb. 1. 14. Are they not all ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation?

Psal. 34. 7. The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

Psal. 91. 1. He that dwelleth in the secret Place of the most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

Ver. 4. He shall cover thee with his Feathers, and under his Wings shalt thou trust.

Ver. 10. There shall no Evil befall thee, neither shall any Plague come nigh thy Dwelling.

Ver. 11. For he shall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.

Ver. 12. They shall bear thee up in their Hands, lest thou dash thy Foot against a Stone.

VIII. Trust in him for his Blessing, and for Success in all your lawful Endeavours; for tho Man do his Endeavour, yet the Success is only from the Lord.

Psal. 37. 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.

Psal. 62. 5. My Soul, wait thou only upon God, for my Expectation is from him.

Psal. 127. 1. Except the Lord build the House, they labour in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman waketh but in vain.

Ver.

Ver. 2. *It is in vain for you to rise up early, and to set up late, to eat the Bread of Sorrows; for so he giveth his beloved Sleep.*

IX. Look up to him, and humbly depend on him, to have all lawful Possessions and Enjoyments sanctify'd to you, that they may be sweeten'd to you, with a Sense of his Love and Favour in Christ; and then they will be Blessings indeed.

Prov. 10. 22. *The Blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no Sorrow with it.*

Psal. 37. 16. *A little that a righteous Man hath, is better than the Riches of many Wicked.*

Prov. 15. 16. *Better is a little with the Fear of the Lord, than great Treasure and Trouble therewith.*

Heb. 13. 5. *Let your Conversation be without Covetousness, and be content with such things as ye have; for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

X. Humbly trust in him for the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, to enable you daily to grow in Grace, and to persevere and hold out in the ways of Truth and Holiness, till you attain the End of your Faith, even the Salvation of your Soul.

2 Pet. 1. 5. *And besides this, giving all Diligence, add to your Faith, Virtue; and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, Godliness; and to Godliness, brotherly Kindness; and to brotherly Kindness, Charity.*

2 Pet. 3. ult. *But grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

1 Cor. 10. 12. *Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*

Rom. 14. 4. *Who art thou that judgest another Man's Servant? to his own Master he standeth or falleth; yea, he shall be holden up, for God is able to make him stand.*

Jude 24. *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the Presence of his Glory, with exceeding Joy.*

1 Cor. 1. 8. *Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Pet. 1. 5. *Who are kept by the Power of God, thro Faith, unto Salvation.*

Luke 22. 32. *But I have pray'd for thee, that thy Faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy Brethren.*

Jer. 32. 40. *And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that they shall not depart from me.*

Heb. 12. 2. *Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our Faith.*

And that you may the better practise this excellent Lesson of living by Faith, take these farther Directions.

Direct. 1. Take heed of Unbelief: endeavour to strengthen your Assent to the Truth of the Word of God; Unbelief is a Mother-Sin. There was a faulting of Assent in our first Parents to the Truth of God's Commination concerning eating of the forbidden Tree, else they had not fallen so sadly; and still 'tis the Ground of most Miscarriages, of Hardness of Heart and Apostacy: Heb. 3. 12, 13. *Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is call'd to-day, lest any of you be harden'd thro the Deceitfulness of Sin.*

He that believeth not the Judgments and Threatnings of God's Word, will not stick to do any Evil; and he that doth not believe the Promises, will not be forward to any Good: All Neglect and Coldness in holy Duties, cometh from the Weakness of our Faith. Did we firmly believe the Glory of Heaven, and the Happiness of the Life to come, we should certainly be more earnest and zealous for the obtaining of it.

Direct. 2. Labour to be well acquainted with the Promises of God, and learn to stay your Soul upon them. If an able and potent Friend promise help in Troubles, how are we chear'd with it? Ought not the Promises of God then to be a strong Consolation to us? The proper Life of a Christian is to take his Comforts and Supports from the Promises of God, and not merely from his outward Providences. God many times alters the Dispensations of his Providence, but doth not alter his Promises; the Promises are the Saints Inheritance, their especial Privilege and Blessing: Isa. 54. 17. *No Weapon that is form'd against thee shall prosper, and every Tongue that shall rise against thee in Judgment thou shalt condemn; this is the Heritage of the Servants of the Lord.* Whilst Christ is at God's right Hand, and the Bible in the
Hand

Hand of gracious Persons, they need not be dejected in any Condition: *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, &c.* So David chides his Soul, and rebukes his Fears; *Psal. 42. 5. & Psal. 77. 10.* he says, *This is my Infirmary;* he bewails his Unbelief, and chides his Heart for Dejection and Distrust of God's Providence.

Direct. 3. Live upon God, and account him *All in All*, even in your highest and fullest Enjoyment of the Creature. Let not the Creature be the Object of your Trust at any time; Trust and Dependence is the greatest Homage and Respect we can yield to the Creator. *Job* says, *Chap. 31. 24. If I have made Gold my Hope, or have said to the fine Gold, thou art my Confidence: Ver. 25. If I have rejoic'd, because my Wealth was great, and because my Hand had gotten much: Ver. 28. I should have deny'd the God that is above.* Men are very apt to make Riches the Staff of their Lives, and the Stay of their Posterity; and so their Hearts leaning on them, are taken off from God. The great Danger of Riches is the over-loving of them, and trusting in them; *Mark 10. 23, 24. How hardly shall they who have Riches enter into the Kingdom of God? &c.*

How many rich Men are there, that look upon themselves, as it were, intrench'd within their Estates, and so promise themselves Security against all Dangers. Thus God is not regarded, but their Wealth and worldly Greatness is made their Rock and Fortrefs: therefore *Covetousness* is call'd *Idolatry*, *Col. 3. 5.* and the covetous Man an *Idolater*, not only for his over-much Love to Riches, but also because his Trust is in them. Take heed therefore of making an *Idol* of the Creature; do not build your Happiness or Felicity on any thing that you here enjoy. It was the Saying of a gracious Person now in Glory, that God and the Creature is no more than God without the Creature. When God affords us Creature-Comforts, we may enjoy them, and should do it thankfully, but trust not in them. Let not the Gifts steal our Hearts from him who is the Giver and Bestower of them: Live upon God in the Use, and live upon God in the Absence of such Comforts and Enjoyments.

Direct.

Direct. 4. Use lawful and fit means for accomplishing and bringing about your lawful Designs, but let your main Trust be on God. Do thy Duty, and commit thy self and thy Affairs to him in quietness of Heart: For a Man to say, he trusts in God, and yet neglects to do his Duty, this is but to mock God. A moderate and prudent Care in the management of our Affairs, is very commendable, such as puts us upon Prayer, and an humble Diligence in the use of lawful means; that once done, a Christian should labour after a holy Moderation and Composedness of Spirit, and should take heed his Heart be not set or fix'd too much on any thing here below, to his disturbance, or to the ruffling of his Spirit, to render him any way more unfitted for his Duty. He should put all his Ways and Affairs into God's hands, he should wait patiently how God will cast his Affairs, and then submit and acquiesce in the Issues of his Providence. O how sweet a Life that Christian leads, who lives in continual Dependence on God! This kind of Life discharges the Creature of all that is burdensome, of all carking Cares and tormenting Fears; it leaves nothing upon him but a conscionable use of the Means. No Life makes us so humble, so lowly, so nothing in our own eyes, as this *Life of Faith*, which fetches all from God. Faith uses Means, but trusteth in God alone, and hereby we shall have more and more discover'd to us the Emptiness of the Creature, and the Fulness that is in God.

In all our Affairs therefore, let us still seek to the Lord, and apply our selves to him, and trust in him. We are dark Creatures, and easily overshoot our selves; we have not Wisdom enough to manage our own Affairs, but God knows (being Wisdom it self) how to direct us, even in our greatest Difficulties, when we know not how to give Counsel to our selves; and takes it well, that we humbly seek and implore his Direction. Hereby we acknowledg our Subjection to him, and Dependence on him, when we will not stir a foot without advising with him; when we desire not to be order'd by our own Wisdom, but *trust in the Lord with all our Hearts*, and do not *lean to our own Understanding*, as we are commanded, *Prov. 3. 5.* Take heed therefore of inordinate Carefulness, and distrusting God: Consider the Evil of this Sin.

21. No Sin more dishonours God, and robs him of his Glory, than this Sin doth. We glorify God when we trust him, and thereby declare to the World, that we own and acknowledge those his Excellences of Wisdom, Power, Mercy, Faithfulness, which his Word ascribes unto him; and therefore it's said of Abraham, Rom. 4. 20. *That he stagger'd not at the Promise of God thro' Unbelief, but was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God.* Ver. 21. *As being fully persuaded, that what he had promis'd, he was able also to perform:* and therefore (Ver. 22.) *It was imputed to him for Righteousness.* Unbelief doth blemish all those Attributes of God before-mention'd; 'tis an interpretative Blasphemy, and calling all these his Divine Attributes into question, and so an high Injury and Dishonour unto him: whereas Faith is said to justify God, Luke 7. 29. that is, to profess and acknowledg him to be such a God, as his Word reveals him to be.

2. Nothing more obstructs and hinders God's Operation, in order to our Relief and Help, than this Sin. If with a due and moderate Care, we resign up our selves and our Concerns into the hands of God, he would charge himself with us; but if we will by our immoderate Carking and Sollicitude, take the care out of his hands, and be so peremptory in our own Designs and Projects, that we will not submit them unto him; then God is discharg'd, and may justly leave us to our selves: and therefore 'tis not only our Duty, but our great Interest, to resign up our selves to God, and submit all our Concernments to his Disposal and Will.

3. Unbelief and Distrust of God is a Sin, against which he hath exceedingly declar'd his Displeasure. The Children of Israel were destroy'd in the Wilderness by this Sin, they believ'd not in God, and trusted not in his Salvation, Psal. 78. 22. They said with their Mouths, that which is the Language of every Heart, where this Sin prevails, *Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness? Can he give Bread also? Can he provide Flesh for his People? therefore the Lord heard this, and was wroth, so a Fire was kindled against Jacob, &c.* Ver. 19, 20, 21, 31. & Psal. 106. 21, 24, 25. and this was the Cause they were at last cut off, Rom. 11. 20. Many were their Sins in the Wilderness, Murmurings, Lustings and Idolatry; but the

the main reason of their Excision and cutting off, was their *Unbelief*. That noble Man, in *2 Kings* 7. 19, 20. was trodden to Death for distrusting God's Power, and could only see the Plenty, but did not taste it. *Moses* and *Aaron* could not enter into the Land of Promise, because of their *Unbelief*, *Numb.* 20. 12. *Zachary* was struck dumb, for not believing what God had reveal'd, *Luke* 1. 20. Our blessed Lord himself did never chide his Disciples for any thing more than for their *Unbelief*, *Luke* 24. 25. & *Mat.* 8. 26.

4. *Unbelief* and *Distrust* of God is a Paganish Sin, as our Saviour intimates, *Mat.* 6. For Heathens that know not God, to be full of carking and caring, is not so much to be wonder'd at; but for us, that profess to believe in God, that acknowledg his Providence, that have so many Promises to support us, and believe what God hath laid up for his Children in another World, to be under the Tyranny of distracting Cares, Anxiety of Mind, and Thoughtfulness (as if God had no care of us) this is an exceeding unworthy Carriage towards God. And remember our Cares are then inordinate, when they cause such a Tumultuousness and Unquietness in our Thoughts and Affections, that Reason is disturb'd, and cannot allay and compose them; or when they exceedingly hinder, or quite put us by the Duties we ought to perform to God; or, lastly, when they cause a sinking or dying in the Heart (as *Nabal's* Heart was said to die within him) when we are disappointed in that we were so eagerly solicitous about: and therefore our Saviour in *Mat.* 6. bids us *take no Thought*, and repeats it three several times; as in *ver.* 25, 31, & 34.

Direct. 5. Take heed of *limiting* God, either to Time, Way, or Means; do your Duty therefore, and resign your self to God, and all your Concernments to his fatherly Care, without being over-solicitous about the Issue. What a black Character is given of those distrustful *Israelites*, in *Psal.* 78. 19, 20, 21. it's said, *They turn'd back, and tempted God, and spake against him.* We must take care therefore, that we do not prescribe to God; we must not go about to subject his Providence to our Direction, and prescribe what he shall do for our Satisfaction.

Direct.

Direct. 6. Reflect upon the Lord's past Kindness, which you have experient'd, and his gracious Dealings with you. Consider how much God hath done for you, and for others, that have trusted in him; and that will tend very much to encourage you still to trust in him, and to depend upon him. The more Experience and Manifestation of God's Power and Presence we have had, the greater reason we have to cast away all Unbelief from us. It exceedingly provok'd God against *Israel*, that notwithstanding so many Experiences of his Power, yet still they distrusted him: *Numb. 14. 11. And the Lord said unto Moses, how long will this People provoke me? and how long will it be ere they believe me? for all the Signs I have shew'd among them.* By every Experience we should grow up into a greater Courage, and Strength of Faith; as *David* drew Inferences of Hope against the present Danger, from the Lion and the Bear, *1 Sam. 17. 36. Thy Servant slew both the Lion and the Bear, and this uncircumcis'd Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defy'd the Armies of the living God.* And as the Apostle *Paul*, who said, *2 Cor. 1. 10. he hath, and doth, and therefore he will deliver; who deliver'd us from so great a Death, and doth deliver, in him we trust that he will yet deliver us.* Christ was angry with his Disciples for not remembering the Miracle of the Loaves, when they were in a like strait again, *Mat. 16. 9.* And God is more angry with the Unbelief of his Children than of others, because they have had more Experience of his Love and Care; and therefore that they should distrust him, who hath been so good and kind unto them, is a higher Provocation.

CHAP. VIII.

Of Eyeing and Observing the Providence of God.

OBERVE all the Passages of God's Providence towards you, whether of Judgment or Mercy. Take notice of every Frown, and every Smile from God, and that will much direct you in your Services of Prayer and

246 Of observing the Providence of God.

and Praise, and teach you Submission to his holy Will. Many Duties depend on the Consideration and taking constant notice of God's providential Dispensations; how much to be blamed then are they, that do not care to observe or regard the Works of God, and the Operation of his hands? Isa. 5. 12. It is certainly our Duty, to observe and acknowledge God's Sovereignty and Dominion in the World, and over all Events here below in it, (not a Sparrow, nor a Hair falling to the ground without our heavenly Father) and where we cannot understand the ways of God, let us yet with an humble Reverence believe that they are order'd with infinite Wisdom. The deep and unsearchable ways of God, are not to be judg'd before the Tribunal of Man's Reason. Labour therefore to get a firm Belief of this great Truth settled in thy Soul, that God governs all human Affairs; and it will be of great efficacy against those Damps and Dejections of Mind, that in Afflictions we are too prone unto; and it will be a singular Antidote against all Murmurings and Repinings. This quieted and compos'd the Heart of old Eli; *It is the Lord*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. and David on the same account says, *I was dumb and open'd not my Mouth, because thou didst it*, Psal. 39. 9. So when a sore and terrible Affliction fell upon Aaron (his two Sons Nadab and Abihu consum'd by Fire from Heaven) it's said of him, *he held his peace*, Lev. 10. 3. As therefore we are diligently to observe and mind all God's providential Dispensations towards us, so remember it is our Duty, and should be the posture of our Spirit, whatever he takes from us, or whatever he does unto us, humbly and absolutely to submit to his Will: remember there is no resisting the Almighty; shall we that are Worms contend with him that made us? If we consider our Sinfulness and Guilt, we have reason to admire he afflicts us no more. If God for ten thousand Stripes due to us, inflicts but fifty, nay but ten, have we not reason to be patient, and to say, he punishes us less than our Iniquities deserve? Labour therefore to be patient under his hand: Murmuring and Repining do but increase our Guilt, and provoke God to double our Punishment. The Parent takes up a Child for whimpering and crying, as well as for any other Fault. Not patiently to submit to the Will of God, is to beg another whipping

Of observing the Providence of God. 447

whipping from him. *In patience therefore possess your Soul.* As Solomon says, Eccles. 10. 10. *If the Iron be blunt, put more strength to it;* so may I say, if the Affliction be strong, put the more Patience: let Patience have its perfect Work (not only its half-work in thee.) Patience meets God in such an humble way, as discreet Abigail met David; *Let not my Lord be angry:* Impatience and Fretting against the Almighty, is just as if a Man should beat his Shins against an Iron Bar; or as if he should throw a stone against Heaven, that will be sure to fall on his own head. Consider farther, that the way to have what we desire, is to submit to God, and lay our selves at his feet. When the Soul is wrought to that perfect Submission, that we can truly say, *Here I am, let the Lord do with me what seemeth him good;* let the Lord please himself, and it shall please me: we have conquer'd the difficulty of living in this World; we have got that precious Art of Chymistry, that will extract Gold out of any thing. We shall be able in some measure, with blessed Paul, to say, *I have learned in all estates to be content.* O labour and pray for this happy Posture of Spirit; and that you may attain to it, be especially careful to secure and maintain your Interest in his Favour, who is the great Governour of the World, and Disposer of all the Affairs of it; *Mat. 10. 29.* What a strong Consolation will it be to us, if this God be our God, our reconcil'd Father in Christ? We may then be assur'd, all things shall work together for our Good. Let the Wind blow from what point of the Compass it will, it shall blow us on towards our Haven. We need not fear the bitterest Potion, if it come from the hand of a loving Father; *John 18. 11.* What my Father prescribes me, I have no reason to fear any hurt from: whatever he takes from thee, or deprives thee of, he will supply to thee again (as one says) either in Kind or in Kindness, some way or other he will make it up to thee. Kindness is God's sure Pay to his Children; if he takes all, and gives himself to thee, he makes thee an abundant amends: 'tis want of Faith, that we cannot find *All in God.*

And as this Consideration will exceedingly becalm the Mind in Afflictions, so when God dispenses himself in a way of Mercy to us, it will exceedingly raise and quicken our Hearts to Thankfulness: we shall give God the
Glory

Glory of all his Mercies, we shall not sacrifice to our own Net, *Deut. 8. 17.* to our own Wit, Wisdom, Industry, Friends, or any second Cause; much less, to Chance, Fortune, or Good-luck, as ignorant People speak: but we shall cast the Crown of all our Mercies at his feet, humbly ascribing the Honour of all to him; we shall then look upon our selves as holding all from him, and to be but his Tenants at will, and therefore oblig'd to pay him his Rent duly and faithfully. And what is the Rent he requires of us, But only to give him the Glory of all his Mercies, and to honour him, and magnify him in the use of them: in a word, to love him and thank him, to serve and obey him, and to walk humbly before him all our days.

CHAP. IX.

Of Watchfulness.

CHARGE upon your self, with all Seriousness, that great and necessary Duty of daily *Watchfulness*, lest you should offend God in any thing; but may be always studying and endeavouring to please him in all things.

Be not like those whose manner is to spend a little time in Prayer in the Morning, and then to take their leave (as it were) of God, for all the Day after; but unto earnest and fervent Prayer, add serious *Watchfulness*. As Endeavour without Prayer is faithless, so Prayer not follow'd with our own diligent Endeavour, is fruitless. The necessity of being continually in this Duty, will appear, by considering,

1. The Watchfulness of our common Adversary the Devil, who as a roaring Lion walks about continually seeking whom he may devour: and from hence the Apostle infers our need to be watchful, *1 Pet. 5. 8.*

He is our Adversary that will do us all the Mischief he can, he is an Accuser that seeks all Advantages against us, and he is term'd a roaring Lion for his Cruelty; and his Diligence is answerable to his Malice, he walks about and is restless to do mischief, with great Subtilty seeking all

all Opportunities and Advantages he can meet with, to procure the Ruin of our Souls.

2. We have, besides this foreign Enemy, one more inward in our own Bosoms, our corrupt Hearts; which being so intimate and within our selves, are the more dangerous, not only because there is a continual Fight and Combat between the Flesh and us, as the Apostle expresses it, *Gal. 5. 17.* but in this respect also, that the Devil himself could not get those advantages against us without their assistance and concurrence. He may solicit and persuade to Sin, but it is by the Consent of our Hearts that he prevails and draws us to it: and these, without his assistance or concurrence, are able to hurt us much. There is so much of *Satan's* Nature in the Heart of every one of us, that would destroy us, if left to our selves. Having therefore such dangerous Enemies as the Devil without, and our own corrupt Hearts within our selves, these call upon us to practise continually this Duty of spiritual Watchfulness.

And for our better direction herein, I shall lay down a *Draught* of the several Particulars treated of under this Head.

First, There are four things we must watch over; namely, (1.) Our Thoughts. (2.) Our Affections. (3.) Our Words. (4.) Our Actions.

Secondly, Six things we must watch against; namely, in the general, against all Sin: but more especially, (1.) Against those Sins we are most *inclined* to by Temper and natural Constitution. (2.) Against the Sins we are most *obnoxious* to, by reason of our particular Calling, Condition, State and Course of Life. (3.) Against the Sins of the *Time* and *Place* wherein we live. (4.) Against all *Occasions* and *Temptations* that we foresee are likely to endanger our Soul. (5.) Against dishonouring God in the use of *lawful* things. (6.) Against *Error* and Seduction of Mind.

Thirdly, One thing we must especially watch for; namely, for Opportunities to glorify God, to do good to others, and to receive good from others.

C H A P. X.

Of Watchfulness over our Thoughts.

I. **T**HE first thing we should carefully watch over, is our Thoughts: be careful not to lodge or entertain any vain or sinful Thoughts in your Mind; *Ma. 5. 4, 5, 7. Jer. 4. 14.* Sinful Thoughts are the *Reubens*, the First-born of Original Sin, and the Beginning of its Strength; they exceedingly defile the Soul, and are the first Movers to Evil, and very abominable in the sight of God. Tread betimes on these Cockatrice-Eggs, lest they break forth into a Serpent. O what reason have we to be humbled for the vain, wanton, foolish, proud, wrathful, covetous, blasphemous, idle, useless, incoherent and unconcerning Thoughts, that do so frequently annoy and pester our Minds!

1. Consider they are Transgressions of God's Law, and expressly forbidden. The Law being spiritual, prescribes spiritual Obedience, reaching to the very Thoughts and Affections: tho these be inward, yet they are the Acts of the Soul, and being inward, are not the less sinful. *Deut. 15. 9. Mat. 15. 19. Ma. 5. 7. Psal. 119. 113. Prov. 4. 23.*

2. They are likewise the cause of all outward actual Sins, the Plotters of all Treason against God, the Panders of all other Lusts: *When Lust hath conceiv'd, it brings forth Sin.* Sinful Thoughts being conceiv'd, and brooded in the Heart, soon bring forth Sin, and are ready to break forth into sinful Acts, *Jam. 1. 15.*

3. Consider, according to these we shall be judg'd at the last Day; when the Lord shall make manifest the Counsels of the Heart, *1 Cor. 4. 5.* God has appointed a Day wherein he will judg the Secrets of Men by Jesus Christ, *Rom. 2. 16.* By which may be understood, as their outward Sins secretly committed, so also the inward secret Thoughts of the Heart, which are naked and open in his sight: we must be accountable then to God for these, as well as for our evil Works; for our

Of Watchfulness over our Thoughts. 451

vain and idle Thoughts, as well as for our vain and idle Words: the Swarms of them shall then be discover'd to our eternal shame, before God, Angels, and Men, without true and unfeigned Repentance, and would sink our Souls into the lowest Hell. Make conscience therefore of your Thoughts, and be not regardless at any time of them. It cannot be deny'd, but that the best of Men, through the Remainders of Corruption in them, are subject to them, to vain and wicked Thoughts, and that in the best Duties, when engag'd in them; but these are their grief and burden, against which they strive, and for which they earnestly beg pardon and help against, and therefore they shall not be laid to their Condemnation.

Let us therefore consider some Remedies against sinful Thoughts:

1. Settle in your Mind a strong and deep Apprehension of God's Omnipresence and Omniscience, and over-awe your Thoughts with this, That they are all seen, and observ'd, and taken notice of by him.

2. Remember that tho in the World's wicked Proverb, *Thoughts are free*, because Man cannot discern them, nor punish them; yet they are not free from God's Observation, *Psal.* 139. 1, 2. nor from his Law (which being spiritual, Blinds the Thoughts of the Heart as well as the outward Man) nor from his Justice, which will call us to account for our sinful Thoughts; nor from the Rebukes and Scourgings of an awaken'd Conscience; which are no small Punishments.

3. Let it be your Care to suppress and crush evil Thoughts at the very first rising: do not at all consent or comply with them, but abhor and abandon them presently, and cry out unto the Lord for help against them. Take heed of representing or acting Sin in your Thoughts. If you would keep your Soul pure, beware of speculative Sinfulness.

4. Be careful to have a stock of good Materials always in readiness, for your Thoughts to work upon. Have some good Subjects ready to present and offer to your Mind, to entertain your Thoughts with. A good Man hath a good Treasure in his Heart, out of which he bringeth forth good things, *Mat.* 12. 35. Let your Mind therefore have always some good Heads to meditate on;

452 Of Watchfulness over our Thoughts.

as the Evil and Danger of Sin, the Necessity of Conversion, your absolute Need of Christ, the Vanity of the Creature, the Shortness and Uncertainty of this Life, the Eternity of thy future State, &c.

*Mors tua, Mors Christi, Flos Mundi, Gloria Caeli,
Et Dolor Inferni, sint meditanda tibi.*

5. Avoid Idleness, and allow not your self in Melancholy. If we do not employ our Mind about that which is Good, it will busy it self about Evil. The Mind of Man, if it be not well employ'd, will be ranging and roving all over the World, and will be intent on things it should not. The Spirit of Man is *active* and *restless*; 'tis like a Mill, it will be either grinding of that which is put into it, or else working upon it self, wearing and wearying it self in foolish, fruitless, and unconcerning Thoughts. Idleness is a grand Occasion of impure and impertinent Thoughts. 'Tis the Devil's time, in which he takes advantage to fill and defile Man's Mind with wicked Suggestions; and Melancholy disposeth the Mind to strange, absurd, incoherent, suspicious, unreasonable Imaginations; to musing, and many sad, perplexing, afflicting Thoughts. *Man disquieteth himself in vain*, saith the Psalmist, *Psal. 39. 6*, framing many imaginary Evils and Grievances to himself, which God hath not really laid upon him. Let it be your care therefore to keep your Mind well employ'd, either in the Duties of Piety, or in the Works of your particular Calling. When you do relax your Mind, at any time, from being intent on serious things, for your necessary Refreshment, be careful to allow your self in innocent Cheerfulness: when the Loins of the Mind are ungirt, and the Thoughts are let loose to run at random, and have not Conscience set over them as a Governour, we are then in great danger of sinning against God.

6. Do not cumber your self with too much worldly Business; that will overcharge the Mind with Sollicitude, and force too many earthly Thoughts upon it; and will fill you with distracting disturbing Thoughts, and torturing Cares. When *Martha* was careful and troubled about many things, she neglected the one thing necessary, Luke 10. 41, 42.

7. Learn

Of Watchfulness over our Thoughts. 453

7. Learn to spiritualize earthly Objects, and to raise holy Meditations from them. This will be an excellent and advantageous Employment for the Mind: this was our blessed Saviour's Practice, and can we follow a better Example?

8. Learn to divert and put by bad Thoughts, by introducing and bringing in some good Thoughts that are contrary to them, into their rooms: thus overcome evil Thoughts by good Thoughts. If self-magnifying Thoughts come in, bring in self-abasing; if distrustful, put your self upon thinking of God's Faithfulness; if revengeful, think how much you need Forgiveness from God: thus let one Wedge drive out another.

9. Beg of God to new-mould your Mind, and to put it into such an holy and heavenly Frame, that it may be fit to produce good Thoughts, as a good Tree doth bring forth good Fruit. Beg that Grace may be the Law of thy Mind, *Rom. 7. 23.* Pray earnestly, act Faith, and put your trust upon the Power and Promise of God, for the casting down all sinful Imaginations in thy Soul, and submitting thy Thoughts to the Obedience of Christ.

10. If you would keep bad Thoughts out of your Mind, be ready to entertain the gracious Motions of the blessed Spirit: *Rev. 3. 20. Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man hear my Voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me.* O do not grieve his Holy Spirit, do not repel so blessed a Guest, who knocks at thy Heart in many a Sermon, and by many a Providence, and sues for Entrance, that he may make thee happy. What, shall the Devil with his wicked Suggestions be let in, and shall the King of Glory with his Train of Graces be shut out? O let it never be so.

11. Remember that if you willingly entertain and lodge in your Mind wicked Thoughts now, (and die in an impenitent and unconverted state) your Thoughts will be your Executioners and Tormenters in Hell. As light as we make of evil Thoughts now, they will then prey upon the Soul as so many Vultures, and be a never-dying Worm in the Conscience. And the more to quicken you to practise these Directions, consider,

This will be a great argument of our Sincerity, and of the Truth of Grace in us, if we are conscientiously

454 *Of Watchfulness over the Affections.*

watchful over our Thoughts. Many Restraints lie upon the outward Man, to over-awe it, and keep it from Evil; but the Power of Grace doth then much appear, when it commands the inward Man, and lays restraint upon our thinking Faculty, that we dare not allow our selves in any sinful Thoughts: *Psal. 119. 113.* David professeth his *Hatred of them*, as being so hateful in the sight of God, and so defiling to the Soul. *Mat. 15. 19, 20.*

C H A P. XI.

Of Watchfulness over the Affections.

II. SET and keep a watch over your *Affections*, the *Motions* and *Stirrings* of your Will, and *Out-goings* of your Heart.

Rightly to order our *Affections*, is one of our principal *Businesses* in this Life. When they are rightly order'd and govern'd, they very much farther and help on our Course in Godliness: whereas disorder'd *Passions* do blind the Judgment, hurry away the Will, fill the Heart and Mind with Disquiet, interrupt Prayer, and other holy Duties. Keep an especial watch therefore over them, that they be not let out or set upon wrong Objects, nor suffer'd to grow unruly and exorbitant. Grace doth not extinguish, but rectify the Affections. Our blessed Lord (who was free from all Sin) was not without Affections; he was angry, griev'd, and at another time rejoic'd. Let it be our Care therefore to look to the right regulating of these Powers, and these Affections which God hath placed in us: and to help in this work (besides what is before written concerning Mortification, to which I refer you) observe these Directions.

I. Beg of the Lord a sound *Mind*, a right *Understanding*, and a clear *Judgment*; that you may be able to discern between Good and Evil, between Substance and Shews, Reality and Appearances. There is great danger in Misapprehensions; for as the Apprehensions of the Mind

Of Watchfulness over the Affections. 455

Mind are weaker or stronger; so the Affections are hotter or cooler. The Will chuses or refuses, and the Affections also embrace or resist, according as the Mind apprehends the thing to be good or evil. The Mind is furnish'd and commission'd by God, to lead and direct the Will and Affections in all their Motions; they are to act by Counsel, as the Lord himself doth, *who orders all things after the Counsel of his own Will*, which is guided by his infinite and unerring Wisdom, *Eph. i. 11.* Therefore,

2. Labour to bring your *Will, Sense, and Appetite* under subjection to right Reason. The Mind is the Light of the Soul, as the Eye is of the Body; as the Eye sees for the whole Body, so the Mind understands for the whole Soul, and directs all the other Faculties in their Actings. If the Eye be dark, how great is that Darkness! And if the Mind be without Understanding, the Man is brutish, the Blind leads the Blind. If Sin therefore seem pleasant (as the forbidden Fruit to *Eve*) hearken not to thy sensual Appetite, but let your Reason tell you 'tis forbidden Fruit, and therefore you must not touch it, and not the less dangerous and pernicious because of the Fairness of its Shew and Appearance: tho Poison is sweet, yet my Reason tells me 'tis Poison still, and therefore not to be ventur'd on. A Man is *Lord of himself*, when Reason rules him; but he becomes a *Slave*, when Willfulness, Appetite, or Passion, bear sway in him. When the Coachman cannot rule the Horses, but is hurry'd away with them, there is nothing but Confusion to be expected; so it is with a Man whose Reason is overborne, or hurry'd away by his headstrong Passions. *Affections* are like Fire and Water; good Servants, but very bad Masters: Fire doth well while 'tis kept in the Chimney, and Water is useful while kept within its Banks; if they break out, they are very dangerous and mischievous Elements. Affections (while they are moderated and kept within their due bounds) are very serviceable; but if they overflow those Banks and Bounds, what a world of mischief follows upon it?

3. Labour to foresee and be prepar'd for such things as may prove great Provocations to you, and are like to kindle or excite your Passions; and let your care be either wisely to avoid them, or to fortify your self as much as

456 Of Watchfulness over the Affections.

may be against them. Passions are far more easily prevented than moderated; and here Premeditation is of singular use, whereby the Mind may fortify and strengthen it self against the Exorbitancy of Passion before it arise, by considering the Unreasonableness of it, and the bitter Fruits and Effects that may be expected from it:

Prov. 4. 23. of most notorious sins, *abundant* and *many*

4. Resist *evil Affections* at the beginning, before they grow high and headstrong, lest they get strength and grow too hard for you afterward, *as hath Babylon's Brats against the wall.* Lusts and vile Affections, set alone, do often end in gross Sins; there are *Works of the Flesh*, that follow *Lusts of the Flesh*, *Gal. 5. 19.* Love of Pleasure, if uncontroul'd, may end in Drunkenness or Uncleaness. Envy and Malice, if unchecked, may end in Murder or Violence. *Judas's Covetousness* allow'd, ended in his forsaking Christ; and *Peter's denying him*, ended in his maintaining the same with Gurling and Swearing: *Mat. 26. 74.* *Jam. 1. 15.*

5. Temperance and keeping under the Body, is an excellent means to mortify Lusts, Passions, and vile Affections, which war against the Soul. He that pampers his Flesh, feeds his Enemy: and how much better is it to endure the Pains of Mortification here, and use all proper means of subduing and destroying our Corruptions, than to carry them unmortify'd with us to the Grave, and to endure the Horrors of everlasting Darkness hereafter?

6. Direct your Affections to right Objects, to love what you should love, and hate what you should hate, &c. as our blessed Lord instructs us *where to fear*, *Luke 12. 3, 4, 5.* and *St. Paul what to set our Affections upon*; upon things *above, not on things on the earth*, *Col. 3. 2.* Thus being set right, they will be brought more easily to go right, to be *calmly and orderly* in their going. Consider therefore well and advisedly the Object on which you place your Affections, together with the grounds thereof, both what and why; as, why you should love this, and hate that? or why you fear such a thing? So why you are angry, or mourn, or are dejected? Thus *David* asked his Soul, *Psal. 42. 11.* *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? why art thou disquieted within me? &c.* If we misplace our Affections, as by loving what we should hate,

hate, or, on the contrary, disaffecting and hating what we should love; we dishonour our Affections. And if *Woe* be to them that call *Evil Good, and Good Evil*; then no less a *Woe* belongs to them that love Evil, and hate Good: *Isa. 5. 20.*

7. Moderate your *Affections*, labour to keep them within due bounds, and proportion them to their Objects, that they may be in due measure also. Do not love, fear, grieve for, or desire any thing, more than Reason and a clear Judgment (regulated by the unerring Rule of God's Word) discerns just occasion for, and would allow. Love the *best things* most; love God and spiritual things with the principal of your Affections, (the first Commandment requires it; *Mark 12. 30.*) and love things *less* good (as all Creature-Comforts, yea, our own Lives) in a lower degree, and with a subordinate Affection. Grieve *most* for displeasing and dishonouring God, and for all outward Afflictions in a *less* measure. Rejoice *most* in the Lord, and in his Love and Favour, and in his People, as *David*, *Psal. 16. 3.* and *less* in any temporal and temporary Enjoyments; *Luke 10. 20.*

8. Watch against *sinful Passion*; remember that when the Blood and Spirits are moved, and Passion is up, Reason is dethroned, and a right Judgment can hardly be made of any thing. *Passions* (like some Glasses) represent things *falsely*, making a Mountain sometimes of a Mole-hill, and sometimes a Mole-hill they magnify into a Mountain. Under that Disorder therefore of Spirit, whilst Reason is out of the Throne, resolve not suddenly on any thing your *Passion* would lead you to: let your first and chief care be, to get your stormy and unruly Spirits suppressed and calm'd, and those *Passions* laid; looking up to him who rules the raging Waves, and can enable us to subdue them: and then (and not before) we shall come again to a just and right Apprehension of whatever is in our view. How many have at leisure bitterly repented, when they have by *Passion* so unreasonably and grievously overshot themselves!

9. Consider, the Root of all inordinate *Passion* is immoderate *Self-Love*, which ought to be subdu'd and mortify'd.

10. Meditate often on the Abasings, Sufferings, Death, and *Passion* of our Lord and Saviour. Christ suffered for

458 Of Watchfulness over our Words.

us, leaving us an example, saith the Apostle, 1 Per. 2. 21. that we should follow his steps. Was he crucify'd for us, and shall not we crucify our vile Affections for him? Did he renounce his own Will to accomplish our Salvation, and shall not we deny our Wills for him? our corrupt Wills, the Wills of the *Flesh* and of the *Mind*, as the Apostle calls them, Eph. 2. 3. the Lustings of the lower and of the upper Soul. Was he made of no reputation for us, and shall we be proud? Did he lay down his very Life for us his Enemies, and shall not we forgive an Enemy for his sake? O let us labour, from the Consideration of Christ's Sufferings, to mortify our Lusts and vile Affections; Eph. 4. 32.

C H A P. XII.

Of Watchfulness over our Words.

III. **W**A T C H over your Words. When the Thoughts and Affections are regular and well-govern'd, and the Heart is kept (as we are exhorted) with all diligence, Prov. 4. 23. this Duty may be perform'd with much less difficulty: for out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh, Mat. 12. 34. They that do not take heed to their Spirits, what Thoughts they entertain; and to their Affections, that they be duly regulated; will not ordinarily take heed to their Words. But the Servants of God in all Ages have seen a great deal of reason to resolve within themselves, to take heed of offending with their Tongues, and to pray earnestly to the Lord that he would please to set a watch before their mouths, and to keep the door of their lips, Psal. 141. 3. It is a great part of Religion rightly to govern and bridle the Tongue: Jam. 1. 26. If any Man seemeth to be religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, his Religion is vain. And the Transgression of the Tongue is the rather to be watch'd against, because of the natural Propensity that is in us to offend in that kind; partly because of that quick Intercourse that is between the Tongue and the Heart, so that we sin in an instant; partly because Speech is an

Act we perform without Labour, and so we the more easily and readily offend this way; and lastly because the Sins of the Tongue are very pleasing and compliant with corrupt Nature. Therefore the Apostle James saith, Jam. 3. 2. *If any Man offend not in Word, the same is a perfect Man; i. e. not only a Beginner, but one that is come to some Ripeness and Growth in Christianity: his Care and Watchfulness over his Words, argues him to be a sound, sincere, and upright Christian.* O how much reason have we to be seriously humbled for the Errors and Miscarriages of our Tongues! Divide the Sins of Man into two parts; says *Nazianzen*, and one half of them are the Sins of the Tongue. Another reckons up twenty four Sins of the Tongue, and yet possibly he hath not reckon'd all:

1. Taking God's Name in vain, in ordinary Communication. 2. Unlawful and customary Swearing. 3. Lying. 4. Cursing. 5. Perjury. 6. Blasphemy. 7. Rash and unlawful Vows. 8. Heartless and hypocritical Praying. 9. False Accusing. 10. Open Railing, Reviling, and Reproaching. 11. Secret Defaming, Backbiting, and Whispering. 12. Scoffing, Jeering, Scorning, giving biting Girds and Reflections. 13. Ribaldry, filthy Speaking, scurrilous Jestings, rotten Communication. 14. Menacing and threatening Revenge. 15. Deceiving and cheating Expressions. 16. Proud Boasting, and Self-magnifying. 17. Rash Judging and Censuring. 18. Vain and idle Tatling. 19. Flattering and soothing in Evil. 20. Enticing Words, alluring by them to Sin. 21. Seducing into Error. 22. Murmuring and Repining. 23. Disclosing Secrets, contrary to Promise. To all which may be added, 24. Sinful Silence, and Omission of speaking when Duty requires it.

O how vile are we, if one Member be guilty of so much Sin! Not without reason therefore hath the Apostle James, Chap. 3. 6. describ'd an evil Tongue to be a *Fire, a World of Iniquity, and set on fire of Hell*; that is, from the Devil, the Father of Lyes, Malice, and Virulency. They that nourish an evil Tongue, nourish that which comes from Hell, and which will carry them thither, without serious and timely Repentance. *The Tongue can no man tame, as the Apostle goes on, ver. 8. i. e. of himself, without the Concurrence of Divine Grace.*

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Let us pray therefore for this Grace, that we may take heed to our Words, that we offend not with our Tongue. And for the better regulating of it, observe these Directions.

1. Begin at your *Heart*, if you would rightly govern your *Tongue*. Pray as *David* did, *Psal. 51. 10. Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.* The Disorders of the Tongue (as was before observ'd) usually proceed from the Distempers of the Heart, as our Saviour assures us, *Mat. 15. 18, 19.* Idleness of Words proceeds from Vanity of the Thoughts, Rashness of Speech from Hastiness of the Spirit, Boasting and proud Bragging from Pride of Heart, Reviling and open Reproaching from inward Malice. The foul Stomach betrays it self in a stinking Breath, the Naughtiness of the Heart vents it self by the Tongue; and a Heart stored with Wisdom and Grace, will discover it self in savoury Discourse.

2. Let your *End* and *Aim* in speaking be to glorify God, and to do good to others. That word is an idle word, and utterly lost, which tends not to some good purpose, and such words must be accounted for, *Mat. 12. 36.* Either speak some thing better than silence, or keep silent, says the *Heathen Poet*. Chuse either to speak that which is (some way or other) profitable, or to be silent. But then there may be a sinful Silence, as in these cases:

1. When God is dishonour'd, and we express no dislike of it.

2. When it's our Duty to reprove another, and we neglect it.

3. When our Silence proceeds from want of Delight in spiritual things; when we can be free enough to any worldly Discourse, but cannot abide to speak of matters that concern our Souls.

4. When we are ashamed to own the Ways of God, for fear of Reproach.

5. When we neglect to give good Counsel where we ought, and have an opportunity to do it.

It was the great Trouble of a holy Man, upon his reflecting afterwards thereon, that he had spent the whole time of Dinner with his Friends, without speaking something for God. The more Good we minister to others, the more Good we may hope our selves to receive. In

conversing with Christian Friends, when we meet with them at any time, and have opportunity, let us be sure to make some holy advantage by them: learn of them all the Good you can, and communicate with them all the good things you know, and have opportunity for. As the Gifts we receive from Men, by much using, do the more decrease and perish; so the Gifts of God, by faithful using and employing them, do more grow and increase. *Mark 4. 25.* Like the Widow's Pitcher of Oil, the more it pour'd out to fill other Vessels, the more it was still replenish'd: *The liberal Soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth others, shall be watered also himself; Prov. 11. 25.*

3. Consider well before you speak, and be not rash with your Mouth, *Prov. 15. 28.* *Be slow to speak,* saith the Apostle *James, Chap. 1. 19. i. e.* deliberate and be well-advis'd, before you speak, let your Mind guide and direct your Tongue. God causeth his own Servants to weigh their words, as to consider all their other ways, tho other Men are so regardless of both: *The Heart of the Righteous studieth to answer, but the Mouth of the Wicked poureth out evil things;* *Prov. 15. 28.* as the muddy Fountain casteth out foul Streams. Hence *the Mouth of the Righteous is said to be a Well of Life, Prov. 10. 11.* They desire that the Streams of their Words may be guided into right Channels, so as may be most useful to those that hear them, and that their Lips may feed many with whom they converse. Bishop *Latimer* tells us, that he was the more cautious what he said before his *Examiners*, when he heard the Pen writing behind the Hangings. And doubtless all those whose Hearts are aw'd with the Fear of the most High God, do the rather ponder their words, in conscientious respect to his Omniscent Majesty. The Lord *hearkeneth,* and *heareth* all our words; such as are savoury and seasonable, to reward them, *Mal. 3. 16.* and all idle and vain words, to call us hereafter to an account for them. That Sentence of the Wise-man should always dwell upon our Hearts, *Prov. 13. 3.* *He that keepeth his Mouth, keepeth his Life.* When our words are once out of our mouths, they are past recalling, and no longer our own; and therefore one set a pretty moral Picture over his Table (a place usually of too much licentious Discourse) of a Man out

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462 *Of Watchfulness over our Words.*

of whose Mouth many little *Birds* flew (which were his *Words*) which he with both his Hands strove to catch again, but could not. Consider therefore before you speak, and e'er your Words be gone out of your Reach and Power; especially consider, before you *promise* any thing, whether the thing be good, fit, convenient, and in your Power, and whether you do sincerely purpose to perform it. He that does not this, will be apt to err, and to ensnare himself by his *own Words*, Prov. 6. 2. & 12. 13.

4. Whatever you have covenanted, agreed, or promis'd, be careful to perform, tho' to your Loss and Damage. If you find your self unable to perform it, give notice betimes, and crave either Forbearance, or a Release. It's a good Caution that one gives, that we should be exceeding careful what *Vows* we make to God, and what *Promises* to Man. It's one of the Characters of a Citizen of *Sion*, that he *sweareth* (or promiseth) *to his own Hurt, and alters not*, Psal. 15. 4.

5. Be sure that whatever you speak, be morally true (that is, that there be an Agreement between your Thoughts, and what you speak) tho' you are not oblig'd to speak all that you know to be true, at all times, or without a Call to it: it's a good Caution, *believe not all that is told you, nor tell all that you hear*.

6. Speak with a great deal of Caution and Wariness, where you are aggriev'd, and think you suffer. Trust not your self, if there be any the least Touch of Ill-will or Envy in you towards the Person spoken of: *Ill-will never speaks well*. Under a Sense of Wrong, our Minds are apt to run into very uncharitable Imaginations; there may be sometimes Malice in speaking the Truth. An eager Desire to *spread* abroad the *Faults* of others, tho' true, manifests a very uncharitable, and an evil Frame of Heart.

7. Forbear altogether to speak when you are in Passion; he that is in a high Fit of Passion, is as truly drunk, as he whose Head is full of Wine. Passion is a bad Counsellor, and as ill a Speaker: *Moses*, when in Passion, *spoke unadvisedly with his Lips*, Psal. 106. 33. *Job* cursed the Day of his Nativity, *Job* 3. 2, 3. *Jonah* then spake pettishly against God himself, *Jonah* 4. 9.

8. Deal as tenderly with another's good Name, as you desire your own should be dealt with; be very wary of speaking of the Credit of others, on bare Reports. *A good Name is better than Riches*, Prov. 22. 1. Possibly thou abhorrest to steal from thy Neighbour, or be thought a Thief; do not then rob him of his good Name, which is more precious than worldly Substance. By a good Name, many have done good after their Death, their *Memory being blessed*, Prov. 10. 7. and by the Loss of it, many have been render'd useless while they liv'd.

9. Be not severe spirited, and apt to interpret every thing in the worst sense. Let Charity have its *perfect Work*; it's better to err ten times in a way of Charity, than once in a way of Cruelty. Goodness is least suspicious: Gracious Hearts reflect most upon themselves; they do not seek so much what to reprove in others, as what to amend in themselves; they love to look inward, and being sensible of their own Failings, are tender of reflecting on the Weaknesses of others; whereas those that are most inquisitive into the Lives of others, are usually most careless in reforming their own. Sharp Censurers and Reprovers had need be very exact in their own Lives, else in judging others they pronounce their own Doom. It's said of one that heard of the Fall of a Professor, that he fell into a bitter weeping, and said, That which was his Condition to-day, might be his own to-morrow. Consider how often you have your self offended, and how prone to offend, and use another with the same Mercy you would desire your self: Gal. 6. 1. *Brethren, if any Man be overtaken in a Fault, ye which are spiritual restore such a one in the Spirit of Meekness, considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted.* They that are most spiritual, are most tender to set a fallen Christian in joint again. If the Action is not to be excus'd, yet consider possibly the Intention might be good, or that it might proceed from Ignorance, or some violent Temptation; and that thou thy self may'st so fall, if so tempted, and God do not sustain thee: therefore cherish always an humble Sense of thy own Frailty, and that may make you more charitable towards others; and be especially careful not to make the Failings and Miscarriages of others (which should be matter

464 *Of Watchfulness over our Words.*

matter of Grief to us, and let us upon praying for them, 1 *John* 5. 16.) to serve us for Mirth and Sport; and yet this is the usual Entertainment of this corrupt World: But the Apostle tells us, 1 *Cor.* 13. 6. *Charity rejoiceth not in Iniquity*; and therefore cannot make the Sins and Fallings of others its Recreation.

10. Do not recite *Jests* made upon *Scripture*, or contriv'd out of *Scripture-Phrase*; which can hardly be told, or heard, without leaving in the Mind some Diminution of the Majesty and Authority of God's Word, the Dignity whereof we ought always to maintain. Therefore it's ill trusting our Corruptions, with the bare reporting of them, or likewise with the mentioning or repeating such *Jests* on the *Scripture* made by wicked Wits, for fear of the bad Effects that may ensue thereon, unless we have a just Call to do it. Our Tongue is our *Glory*, *Psal.* 57. 8. with that we should *bless the Lord at all times, his Praise should be continually in our Mouths*, *Psal.* 34. 1. with that we should labour to do good to others with whom we converse, let us not then pervert it from the right use. Moral Infection spreads abroad by Words, as the pestilential doth by a corrupt Breath: There are some Sins which the Apostle forbids should be so much as *named* amongst Christians, *Eph.* 5. 3.

11. Speak not of God but with Fear and Reverence, and awful Apprehensions of his infinite *Excellencies*; and being we are not worthy to take his holy Name into our Mouths, much less may we dare to use it lightly, or vainly in our Talk. It was said of that excellent Person Mr. *Boyle*, that usually before he nam'd the Name of God, he would make some short Pause first.

12. Speak with great Modesty, when the Matter any ways relates to your own Commendation. A Man's Praise smells *sweet* out of another's Mouth, but *stinks* out of his own.

13. Speak not ill of any Person, except it be upon just occasion, and in order to some Good, that God may have Glory thereby, and the Persons to whom you speak may be warn'd and admonish'd, *Tit.* 3. 2.

14. Instead of speaking ill of or censuring another, privately admonish him, not in a masterly way, but in the Spirit of Meekness. Let Love sweeten your Words, and when this rules in the Heart, the Law of Kindness will be in the Tongue.

15. When

Of Watchfulness over our Actions. 465

15. When the Glory of God, or the Good of your Neighbour requires it, speak the Truth, and fear not the Face of Man; reprove faithfully, and ever think him a true Friend, that tells you secretly and plainly of your Faults. He is said to *hate his Brother in his Heart, that suffers Sin to lie upon him.* Reprehension, whether from the Mouth of a Friend, or an Enemy, may be useful; for if the thing be true, as you think it to be, it is a seasonable Warning; and if false, it may be an useful Caution. To avoid this Sin the more carefully, and all Appearance of it, let not the Greatness of any Person deter you from doing your Duty herein; the Frown of a Prince may sometimes be the Favour of God. As Flattery will not always hold in Credit, so neither will Truth and Faithfulness continue in Disgrace: *Prov. 28.*
23. *He that rebuketh a Man, afterward shall find more Favour, than he that flattereth with his Tongue.* *Prov. 27.*
6. *Faithful are the Wounds of a Friend, but the Kisses of an Enemy are deceitful.*

16. Lastly, Consider what Salomon says, *Prov. 10. 19.* *In the multitude of Words there wanteth not Sin, and he that refrainerh his Lips is wise.* Due and besitting Silence is many times a great Preserver of Innocency; but when the Tongue runs very fast, and speaks more than cometh to its share, 'tis ordinarily a Servant either to Pride or Passion.

C H A P. XIII.

Of Watchfulness over our Actions.

IV. **W**ATCH over all your *Actions.* This is indispensibly necessary, that we may approve our selves upright. There is a great Similitude between a Christian's Life, and walking from Place to Place. The whole Life of a Christian is fitly compar'd to a Journey, and particular Actions are so many Steps in it, towards an eternal State, either of Happiness or Misery. Every Step we take tends either to *Good or Evil*, to God or Satan, to Duty or Sin; both greater and lesser Actions

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466 Of Watchfulness over our Actions.

are Paces in this Journey, whether of our general or our particular Calling: even the meanest, as eating, &c. if rightly set, sets us nearer to God and Heaven; 1 Cor. 10. 31. *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.* As the whetting the Scythe helps forward the Business of the Husbandman, so it is here; and therefore we may not neglect the least or meanest of our Actions, but look to all, and examine all, whether we step thereby towards Heaven or Hell. The Apostle gives us an excellent Exhortation, Eph. 5. 15. *See that ye walk circumspectly, not as Fools, but as wise.* And, 1 Pet. 1. 15. we are commanded to be *holy in all manner of Conversation.* True and real Christianity is that great Business of our Life, that calls for our utmost Care and Diligence; it's the strait Gate that leadeth unto Life. There is a great deal of Watchfulness and Circumspection requir'd, to keep our Consciences void of Offence, both towards God, and towards Men. How sad a sight is it, to see Men in Words professing Christ, and yet in Works denying him? *Shew me thy Faith by thy Works,* saith St. James. And our Saviour, in Mat. 5. 16. *Let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* The Men of the World have their Eyes on the Lives and Conversations of Professors; they know not what they do in their Closets, they care not much what they do in the Congregation, but they look what the Tenour and Course of their Lives is. O therefore let those that name the Name of Christ depart from all Iniquity! Let such as profess themselves real Christians, and Members of the holy Jesus, take heed of being taken tardy in such things, which mere moral Men (that are Strangers to the Life of Grace) cannot be justly charg'd with.

Let us take heed the Name of God be not blasphem'd, nor his Honour wounded by any indecent or unbecoming, and much less by any ungodly Action of ours. Take heed of bringing a Scandal on Religion, and a Reproach on the Gospel. If ever we would win others to Religion (as we shall desire, if we be truly wise, Prov. 11. 30.) we must be exemplary in Holiness and Righteousness our selves. It is a woful thing to be an Offence and Stumbling-Block to others, and an occa-

tion

sion of keeping them off from embracing the ways of God. Take heed of doing any such things, as may make Religion to stink in the Nostribs of profane Men. Take heed of doing any thing that is not justifiable or warrantable, and which may be a Scandal to others. There are indeed Scandals and Offences not justly given, but taken, such as wicked Men take, thro' their own corrupt and malicious Hearts, as the Pharisees did at Christ; such are their own Destroyers, and like Serpents turn every thing they eat into Poison: but the true Christian is very tender of God's Glory, and the Repute of Religion; and therefore dare not dishonour him, or blemish it, by doing any thing that is unwarrantable. We are commanded to *abstain from all appearance of Evil*, 1 Thess. 5. 22. do nothing therefore that is unbecoming a real Christian. Let us reflect upon our selves, when tempted to any evil Action, as *Nehemiah* in another Case; Chap. 6. 11. *Shall such a Man as I flee?* So say, *Shall such a one as I, that bear the Name, and wear the Livery of such a Master, dishonour him by Lying, Deceit, Pride, Covetousness, Earthly mindedness, Passion?* and O if ever we be overcome with such things, we may truly say to our selves, what *Michol* said falsely to *David*, we have made our selves like one of the vile and base ones of the Earth.

That therefore we may be the more seriously watchful over all our Actions, let us observe carefully these following Directions:

I. Look carefully to the Principle, Spring and Rise of them. Observe from whence all your external Obedience flows: Does it come from an inward Principle of Grace, from a sanctify'd Heart, from a new Nature, from a Principle of Faith and Love, or from external Motives, and outward Respects and Considerations? 'Tis not the Matter that makes the Work good, but the Principle: Some things may be done (for the matter good) by mere natural Men, either for Credit, or upon the Impulses of natural Conscience, or from a servile Frame of Spirit, like Fruits ripen'd by Art and Force, that are not natural and kindly; but we must look that all our Works be wrought in God, out of Love to him, and Obedience to his Will, and in Faith, expecting our Reward from him.

2. Look to your *Rule*. Is the Word of God the Rule and Square of all your Actions? *Thy Word is a Light to my Feet, and a Lamborn to my Paths*, says David, Psal. 119. 105. And as many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and upon the Israel of God, says the Apostle, Gal. 6. 16. How many walk in a disorderly way, having no Law or Rule but their own Lusts and corrupt Wills, no Guide they are led by, but their own blind Passions and Humours; but if we would order our Actions aright, we must take the Word of God for our Rule.

3. Look well to your *Aim and End*; your main and ultimate End must be God's Glory. A Christian's whole Life should be a *living unto God*, Gal. 2. 19. All that is done by us, whether it be Acts of Piety, Justice, Temperance, or Charity, all should be done with this Aim, that God may be glorify'd thereby. In all the Actions of our Lives, whether natural, civil, or spiritual, we must still design the *Glory of God* therein, 1 Cor. 6. 20. I shall close these Directions with the Mr. Baxter, Advice of an eminent and laborious Divine In the Work of the Gospel (when near his Death) to his Friends visiting him; Let God be your Portion, Heaven your Home, God's Glory your End, and his Word your Rule; and then you may on Scripture-Grounds (thro Christ) live in the comfortable and joyful Assurance of a blessed Eternity.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the Things we must more especially watch against.

AS we must labour to keep up our Watch continually, over our Thoughts and Affections, our Words and Actions; so there are some things (in the next place) to be consider'd, which we must more especially watch against; as,

1. Against all Sin (in general) but especially those Sins we are most inclin'd to, by Temper, Age, and natural Constitution,

situation, that are thereby become as a right Hand, or a right Eye to us, our own *Iniquities*: the weakest part of the City must have the strongest Guard. Some Affections are predominant in one Person, some in another; some in one Age, and some in another. There are *youthful Lusts*, 2 Tim. 2. 22. as well as Infirmities proper to old Age; and it was a great Argument of *David's* Sincerity, that he could truly say, Psal. 18. 23. *I was upright before thee, and kept my self from mine Iniquity.* Study therefore your Heart, and consider what Sins you are most prone and addicted to. All Sins fight against the Soul, but your Master-Sin is the *Goliath*; endeavour (thro the Assistance of Divine Grace) to mortify and subdue that, that it may be slain, and the whole Army of the *Philistines* will be more easily vanquish'd.

2. Watch against the Sins you are most obnoxious and liable to, by reason of your *particular Calling*, Condition, State and Course of Life; each of which ordinarily have their particular Snares attending them, and by reason thereof a Person may have more frequent and stronger Inducements and Temptations to some Sins than to others; which he is therefore the more especially to be watchful against.

3. Against the Sins of the *Times* and *Places* wherein you live: we must be careful not to be carry'd away with the Evil of the Times. It is a Description of *wicked Men*, Eph. 2. 2. that *they walk'd according to the Course of this World*; i. e. according to the Age, as the manner of the Times went. But of righteous *Noah* we have another kind of Character, Gen. 6. 9. *Noah was a just Man, and upright in his Generation, and Noah walk'd with God.* So in 2 Chron. 17. 3, 4. we read, that the Lord was with *Jehosaphat*, because he walk'd in the first ways of his Father *David*, and sought not unto *Baalim*, but sought unto the Lord God of his Father, and walk'd in his Commandments, and not after the Doings of Israel. And the Apostle exhorts the *Philippians*, Chap. 2. 15. that they should be blameless, and harmless, the Sons of God without Rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Nation; among whom, says he, *shine ye as Lights in the World.* 'Tis a high Point of Grace, says the worthy Mr. *Cradock*, not to be snar'd with the Evils of our own times.

4. Watch against the first rising and stirring of Sin and Corruption in the Heart; this Cockatrice is most easily crush'd in the Egg, so is Sin in its first Conception, before it is more thorowly form'd in the Soul. The Apostle James saith, *When Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin; and Sin, when finish'd, bringeth forth Death*, Jam. 1. 15. 'Tis our greatest Wisdom to nip that in the Bud, that would produce such deadly Fruit.

5. Watch against all *Occasions* and *Temptations* that we foresee are likely to endanger our Souls. We that pray to God not to lead us into Temptation, must not run our selves into it. A prudent Man should therefore fore-think and consider in the Morning, what Temptations he is like to be encounter'd with that Day, that so he may (if possible) decline them, or else set his Guards the stronger against them. A weak Temptation, that takes us *unawares*, and off our Guard, may prevail more than a stronger foreseen: *A prudent Man foreseeth the Evil, and hideth himself; but the Foolish pass on, and are punish'd*; Prov. 22. 3. It's a Point of true spiritual Wisdom to foresee Sin afar off, in the Occasions and Temptations that lead to it, and by avoiding the one to prevent the other. It's easier and safer for the Bird to pass by the Snare, while it is yet out, then it is to break or wind it self out, when once in it. *Watch and pray*, says our Saviour to his Disciples, *Mat. 26. 41. that ye enter not into Temptation*. If we rashly enter the Lifts of Temptation, a thousand to one (such is Man's natural Weakness) we shall not come out without some Foil.

6. Watch against the Danger of dishonouring God in the use of lawful things; such as Meat, Drink, Apparel, lawful Refreshments and Recreations, &c.

Remember that it is in the use even of things lawful, that Satan most usually setteth his Snares for God's Servants; for here the Snare is not so visible, and he prevails more often against those that are not grossly profane and ungodly, by the immoderate and undue use of things, in themselves lawful, than by drawing them to such things as are simply evil, and unlawful. The Devil knows well, that he that will do all he may do, and come to the utmost Bounds of his Liberty, will soon be brought to do somewhat he ought not to do. It was (as I have heard) the *Motto*, which the excellent Lord Chief Justice

tice *Hales* had written on the Head of his Cane, that it might be the more continually under his Eye, *Perimus licitus*. It's dangerous to come near the Borders and Confines of Sin: Those that will go to the utmost Extent of their Christian Liberty, and venture themselves so near the Brink, do many times fall into the Pit of Sin. All things, saith the Apostle, are lawful to me, but all things are not expedient, 1 Cor. 6. 12. & 10. 23. All things, that is, not all things absolutely; but all things in their own nature indifferent, are lawful to me, yet all such things are not always expedient. 'Tis better for us (many times) to forbear some things we may do (and it will never be Grief or Offence of Heart to us, as was said to *David* in another Case, 1 Sam. 25. 31.) than to be once overtaken in what we should not do.

7. Watch against Error. As we must be careful to keep our Hearts from sinful Lusts, and our Lives from being spotted and stain'd by sinful Practices; so we must be careful also to keep our Judgments sound, and our Minds from being tainted with Error. It is a great Judgment, to be given up either to an erroneous Mind, or to vile Affections. Some there are that seem very strict in their Lives, and to be also tender in matters of Morality (as *Lot* of his Guests, Gen. 19.) yet are very loose as to their Judgments, and defil'd with corrupt Doctrine. *Julian the Apostate* was a just, temperate, strict Man; but a bitter Enemy to Christ. Some that are sober in their Lives, are yet drunk with Error: but let such consider that, as they say of Fish, they begin to stink at the Head; so a corrupt Judgment is very frequently the Beginner of a deprav'd and vicious Conversation. It's dangerous playing with Opinions; but (believe it) it's not of small moment what Opinions we hold, and whether we be found in the Faith or no: Grace and Truth usually thrive together; the way of Truth is the way of Life, and Error tendeth to Death. The Apostle tells us of pernicious Doctrines and damnable Heresies, 2 Pet. 2. 1. that bring swift Destruction. Truth in the Mind preserves an Awe of God in the Heart; but false Doctrines blind the Mind, harden the Heart, deprave the Conversation, destroy the Church's Peace, and provoke the Lord to have a Controversy with that People amongst whom they are tolerated; Rev. 2. 14, 15, 20.

To keep you therefore from Error, either in Doctrine or Worship, take these following Directions.

1. Make not Man your Oracle in the things of God; have not the Persons of any (tho the wisest, soberest, and best of Men) in Admiration, so as to be Followers of them, farther than they are of Christ; as the Apostle exhorts, 1 Cor. II. 1. Look unto a higher and more authentick Oracle than the Mouth of Man, considering the wisest of Men are but Men, the best of Men but Men. And we should be the more watchful over ourselves in this particular, because Error, or that which is of our own human Invention, in the Worship of God, and the mixing of this with his Institutions and Appointments, is so agreeable to our corrupt Nature, and Conscience usually rebukes less for Error and superstitious Observances, than for Immorality and Unholiness; and many times also they serve a corrupt Interest (*viz.* Profit, and worldly Advantage, Applause, &c.) and then there is great danger of being drawn away thereby. We shall be found making Man our Oracle in the things of God,

2. When we take things upon trust, magnifying the Day of Man's Judgment, and sitting down satisfy'd therein, as if we had an infallible Guide; while we have no more than the word of a fallible Man, a poor frail Creature, a very Worm, and as yet under a State of Imperfection: *We know but in part*, 1 Cor. 13. Examine therefore what you make Matter of Faith and Practice, by the Canon of Truth, the Holy Scriptures, doing always as the Bereans did, Acts 17. 11. (But of this more under the following Head.)

2. When we value the Truth as we value the Man, either more or less, as the Person bringing it is valued or esteem'd by us; when we value the Truth for the Man's sake, not the Man for the Truth's sake: a too ordinary Weakness of many amongst us, whose Affections out-run their Judgments, and become the Ground of another's Mistake, bringing us farther under the Guilt of this Sin; *viz.* of being carried away by every Wind of Doctrine.

3. When the same Truth is of more easy and ready Acceptance with us from one, than from another; and this either because of the Quickness of his Parts and Gifts, or because of the way of some outward Form, wherein

wherein he agrees with us, or differs from us.

4. When we mind more what Men do, than what they ought to do; what is their Practice, than what is their Duty; when we make their Practice (without looking farther) the Rule of our Duty.

Take heed therefore of this great Mistake and Self-deceit, in placing Religion in *that*, wherein God never plac'd it; in being and doing what others are and do in the things of God (whose Judgments you have an esteem and value for) without inquiring into the Grounds and Reasons of their Practice; or in conformity only to the Times you live in. Content not your selves to walk with those that are good, any farther than you are satisfy'd the way is good and upright wherein they walk. Resolve to own the Way of Truth, tho others forsake it, and to continue following the Lord in the way of his own Appointment and Institution, tho it were without Company. No true-hearted *Nathaniel* thinks better of the Ways of Sin and Error, because of the Multitudes that walk therein; nor worse of the Way of Truth and Holiness, because of the Smallness of the Number of those that walk in it: he says not of any known Sin, either in Practice or Worship, Others do so, and why may not I? Dare not to sin in any particular, because the generality do. It's far better to keep company with the Truth, tho in a solitary Path, than to exchange Truth for Error, for any Company whatsoever.

II. Read and study the Holy Scriptures *impartially*, and hold fast and cleave firmly to those Truths which are therein plainly held forth as the *main Foundations* of the Christian Faith. Ungrounded Christians, who never understood the true Grounds of the Religion they have taken up, and how it is built on the Scriptures, when they meet with Arguments against it, which perhaps they heard not of before, and which they (thro their Unskillfulness) cannot answer, are ready to yield to Error; and think, because they themselves cannot answer them, that no body else can. But as you would not be carry'd away with every Wind of Doctrine, labour rightly to understand the *true Grounds* of the Christian Religion; and to this end, study the Scriptures with Humility, and be much in Prayer to God to guide you by his Holy Spirit into all saving Truth, and to keep you from

from falling into Error. And remember, that what hath been commonly receiv'd by the People of God, and embrac'd and practis'd by the Saints in all Ages, is not lightly to be rejected. It's safer to follow the Footsteps of the Flock of Christ, than to be led away by any *new Notions*, or pretended Revelations, that are not in every thing agreeable thereto; *Cam. 1. 8. See 2 Pet. 3. 17, 18.*

III. Rest not in a bare Knowledge of the Truth, but reduce your Knowledge into Practice: be sincere in the Religion you profess, and the Way of Worship you are persuaded is most agreeable to the Scripture-Rule. Let the Truths of God, like good Leaven, season your Mind, Will, and Affections, and have a powerful influence on your Life. Our Saviour says, *John 7. 17. If any Man will do my Will, he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God.* When Men are in love with Gospel-Truths, for the Goodness, Sweetness, and Benefit they taste in them; they will be most likely to retain them, and hold them fast. They that have any experience in their own Hearts of the Comfort and Efficacy of the Doctrines of Faith in Christ, Repentance, and daily Watchfulness, &c. will not easily throw them off: but they that care not to practise the great and necessary Truths of the Gospel, no wonder if they prove Apostates, and fall off from them. Labour therefore to live in the constant practice of those Truths which you profess, *holding the Mystery of Faith in a pure Conscience, 1 Tim. 3. 9.* The more you grow in Grace, the more you will be kept from falling into the Error of the Wicked, *Heb. 13. 9. 2 Pet. 3. 17.* He that doth what he knows of the Will of God, shall know more of it. And our Saviour says, *John 13. 17. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.* Happiness lies not in the mere knowing and assenting to the Principles of the true Religion, but in living according to them, and expressing the Power and Efficacy of them in our Lives. To be of an Orthodox Judgment, and profane Life, how sadly doth this look! A right Belief should have a powerful influence on the Heart and Life; but the Love of Sin will easily incline the Heart to such corrupt Principles as will give liberty to Sin. Men would fain have that true, that is most accommodate and agreeable to their corrupt Interests. Take heed therefore of harbouring any secret Lust, or Sin in your Heart.

Heart. 'Tis Sin provokes God to give Men up to Error: He many times, out of a secret Judgment, suffers those to fall into Error, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness. *Hymeneus and Alexander* first put away a good Conscience, and then made shipwreck of Faith, 1 Tim. 1. 19, 20. The Women led away by Seducers, 2 Tim. 3. 6, were such as were laden with divers Lusts. What Solomon therefore says of a strange Woman, may be apply'd to a strange Doctrine; *Whoso pleaseth God, shall escape from her, but the Sinner shall be taken by her*; Eccles. 7. 26.

IV. Take heed of Pride, Conceit, and Confidence in your own Judgment and Understanding. It's the Humble, God will teach, but he resisteth the Proud, 1 Pet. 5. 5. Pride usually is the Mother of Heresies and Errors: it was of old the Condemnation of the Devil, 1 Tim. 3. 6 and the Ruin of our first Parents. Proud Persons may carry it high for a time, but commonly God suffers them at last to fall into the Ditch, either of Error or Profaneness.

V. Beware of the Itch of Novelty and affecting new Doctrines: he is half gone in Error, that vainly covets after them. New Doctrines, like new Fashions, do usually take with unstable Minds. We read of itching Ears, 2 Tim. 4. 7. but our blessed Lord hath told us only of one way to Heaven, and that is, by himself; *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*, John 14. 6. there is no new way thither. Faith in Christ, true Repentance, and sincere Obedience, is the good old way that we must walk in, if we hope, on Scripture-Grounds, to come thither.

VI. Expose not your selves to the Temptations of Seducers, by running wilfully (contrary to the express Word of God) and without any just Warrant and Call, into the Company of such, or by reading their Books. The Scripture bids us to beware of them, Mat. 7. 15. not to go after them, Luke 21. 8. to avoid them, Rom. 16. 17. to turn away from them, 2 Tim. 3. 5. and if they should come to us, not to receive them, or bid them God-speed, or encourage them in their way; 2 John 5. 10.

Obj. Are we not commanded to prove all things? 1 Thess. 5. 21.

Ans. Will you try Poison whether it will kill you or no? The Meaning therefore of this place must needs be,

be, that we are to examine the Doctrines (deliver'd to us) by the Scripture, whether they are built thereon or no. Like those noble Bereans, Acts 17. 11. and as the Prophet directs, Isa. 8. 20. *To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them.* Besides, we must consider every private Christian is not fit to cope with Hereticks that are labouring to undermine your Faith, and to shake and unsettle you in the grand Truths of the Gospel.

VII. Absent not your selves from the publick Ordinances of Christ, in what place soever they are duly administered; nor forsake his faithful Ministers, whose Endeavours God hath borne witness to, by the real Conversion of many thousand Souls. It's not safe to balk the known and ordinary ways wherein God useth to dispense his spiritual Blessings: Wisdom's Dole is to be expected at Wisdom's Gate. Eph. 4. 11, 12. *And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying the Body of Christ.*

VIII. Remember we are not only to be stedfast in the Truth, and to hold fast the Truth as to our own particular, but also in our place to be valiant for the Truth, Jer. 9. 3. *to contend for the Faith once deliver'd to the Saints,* Jude ver. 3. Truth contain'd in the Doctrine of the Gospel, is one of the choicest Treasures and greatest Privileges that ever God bestow'd on any People; and shall we easily and tamely part with it? Shall we suffer the subtle and crafty Emisaries of the *Romish Church*, that are so frequently busy and abroad in disguise, to rob us, and steal from us our best Treasure? Shall we suffer them to cheat us and our Posterity of our richest Jewel, the Gospel, and all the sacred Truths contain'd therein? Shall we suffer the Interest of our Lord and Master to be trodden under foot? Indeed we are not to be bitter against the Persons of the Errorous, tho' drowned in Error and the grossest Idolatry, if there may be hope of their being reclaim'd from it; but we are to be sensible how much God is dishonour'd thereby, in a Land where the Light of the Gospel hath now so long and so clearly shined, and so many have been already ruin'd by their pernicious Errors. And therefore it deeply concerns us,

as to preserve our own Souls from this Infection, by keeping at the greatest distance from it; so as to have a tender Regard to, and Concern for our Posterity, that we may transmit the Sacred Truths of the Gospel down to them. We would be willing to leave our Estates to our Children, and shall we not be more careful to leave them the Gospel, the spiritual Food of their Souls? And having our selves been privileg'd so long in the Enjoyment of it, shall we not account our selves highly concern'd, as faithful Trustees of so great a Treasure, to keep the Doctrine of our Salvation pure and unmix'd (as much as in us lies) and to leave it so, to those that are to come after us.

IX. Remember how the Scripture hath forewarn'd us that there must be *Heresies*, 1 Cor. 11. 19, not only proceeding from Satan's *Malice*, but Man's *Corruption*. And God is pleas'd to permit and suffer them to spring up, for wise and gracious Ends; as that,

1. His glorious Truths may be the more clear'd up and evidenc'd, and more strongly confirm'd and maintain'd. Many parts of true Doctrine have been but slenderly guarded, till assaulted by Hereticks; and by carefully searching the Sacred Records and Testimonies of God's Word, many Truths have been the more clear'd and settled.

2. That they that are approv'd, may by such Opposition of Adversaries be made manifest. That is pure Gold that endures the Tryal of the Fire: A quick smart Wind severs the solid Grain from the Chaff. When you see an Army march, you know not who is valiant, and who not: but when the Enemy approaches, then is the tryal.

3. That the Obstinate may be render'd inexcusable, who wilfully shut their eyes against those open Manifestations of the Truth, which by the Opposition of the Adversary, God is pleas'd to afford his Church.

Now that you may come to a more clear and perfect Knowledge of the Nature of the Protestant Religion, what it is that we make a profession of, and what Properties or special Characters it bears the Stamp of, and has imprinted on it, differencing it from all other Religions in the World, that you may be able to give an Answer to any that shall ask you a Reason of your Faith; and why you are of this rather than of another Religion,

and particularly why a *Protestant* rather than a *Papist*: [For as to other Differences, *viz.* *Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent, Anabaptist*, these are not a diverse and different Religion from each other, but differing Persuasions of Persons in some lower matters, who all agree in *Fundamentals*, and are of one and the same mind as to the *Essentials* of Christianity.] And to help you in this matter, know, That true Religion is that way of serving and worshipping the true God, which he hath himself appointed. *Solomon* gives us the whole that God requires and expects from Man, *Eccles. 12. 13. Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole Duty of Man.* The Characters then of the true Christian Faith, by which it may be known from all other, that are Pretenders only to it, take thus summed up under these few following Heads.

1. It leads up to the acknowledging of that one and only true God, who is the Maker of Heaven and Earth, who is the Searcher of the Heart, and knows all our Thoughts. *Isa. 44. 5. Gen. 1. 1. Jer. 10. 11, 12. & 17. 10. Amos 4. 13. Psal. 139. 2.*

2. It teaches us to own and acknowledg in the God-head or Divine Nature, a *Trinity* in *Unity*; the *Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are one.* 1 John 5. 7. These are three, not divided, but distinct in personal Relation, or a threefold Manner of Subsistence; the Father of himself, and begets the Son; the Son begotten of the Father; and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son: which Begetting and Proceeding are not in Time, but from Eternity; the Father was never without the Son, nor the Father and Son without the Holy Spirit, they are all three eternally and equally God; yet not three Gods, but *one God* in the same Essence or eternal Being. The Trinity of Persons doth not take away the Unity of Essence; but as we usually express it, they are *three Persons*, but *one God*.

3. It requires the giving up our *Hearts* to God; and herewith the whole of our outward Man. *Deut. 6. 5. & 10. 12. Prov. 23. 26. 1 Cor. 6. 20.*

4. It leads up to a *Mediator*, who hath reconcil'd us to God; and in and by whom we look for Acceptance, both of our Persons and Services. *Rom. 5. 10, 11. Eph. 1. 6.*

5. It owns *Christ Jesus the Lord*, the alone *Mediator*, and no other; 1 Tim. 2. 5. 6. It

6. It requires our being and doing all to the Praise and Glory of God. *1 Cor. 10. 31. Phil. 1. 11.*

7. It teaches us to look unto God alone for the Rule of his Worship, acknowledging no other, as having dominion over our Faith and Conscience. *Mat. 23. 9, 10, 11.*

2 Cor. 1. 24.

Now amongst the many that lay claim to the true Christian Religion, the *Papists* and *Church of Rome* make the greatest noise, boasting themselves to be the only true Christians, and *Catholick Church* in the World; crying down all other for Heretics, and themselves only Apostolical: while the Charge they bring against others, lies wholly at their own doors (as may be made evidently to appear) they being notoriously *Apostates* from the Faith once profess'd at *Rome*, Strangers to and Enemies against that Gospel (as to the Purity of *Doctrine* and *Worship*) which was profess'd and own'd by that Church, at the time the Apostle wrote his Epistle to them; *Rom. 1. 7.* Now there are many things in their Practice, that speak aloud the Proof of this Charge: As,

1. They have set up to themselves, and continue to own another *Universal Head* over the Church, besides Christ; in subordination (say they) to, but indeed in direct opposition against Christ, the only true Head: witness that abominable Position of their great *Bellarmino*, "That if the Pope should err in commanding Vices, and forbidding Vertues, the Church would be bound to believe Vices good, and Vertues to be evil." *De Romano Pontifice*, lib. 4. cap. 5. And to this Vice-Head [*the Pope*] do they ascribe, and from him power is given into the hands of inferiour Priests, to loose or forgive the Sinner his Sin. Hence we have the same *Bellarmino* affirming, "That Christ doth not loose or forgive the Sinner by himself, but only by the Priest." *De Penit.* lib. 3. cap. 3. And *Vasquez*, another Jesuit, says, "God doth not properly loose or forgive a Sinner, but only approves the Priest's loosing of him." Thus we may see Blasphemy writ in the very Forehead of *Papery*.

2. They affirm the Authority of the *Scriptures* to depend upon the Authority and Testimony of the *Church*; and that none are bound to believe the Holy Scriptures to be the Word of God, without the *Church's* Witness and Authority: And hence have some of them said, "That

“That were the Scriptures destitute of the Church’s Authority, they would weigh no more than *Aesop’s* Fables.” And having by their corrupt Writings made their own Glosses upon those Sacred Records, they dare not now trust the People with the reading of them.

3. They maintain *Doctrines of Devils*: (1.) In forbidding *Marriage* to some (*viz.* their Priests) at all times, and to all at some times. And notwithstanding this, they make Matrimony a Sacrament, and say that it gives Grace. (2.) In forbidding certain kinds of *Mears* at some times, which God hath given for the Use of Man, and to be at all times receiv’d with Thanksgiving; whilst at the same times they indulge themselves in the voluptuous Use of others, tho they do it under a pretence of Abstinence and Fasting: and these the Apostle calls *Doctrines of Devils*, 1 Tim. 4. 1, 2, 3.

4. They turn the great and weighty Doctrine of Repentance, into a mere Formality and mock Repentance; witness their *Penances*, their *Pilgrimages*, their saying over so many *Pater-nosters* and *Ave-Maries*, to procure Favour and Acceptance with God.

5. Their Doctrine of *Transubstantiation* (for maintaining of which, their chief Arguments have been *Fire and Faggot*) is contrary both to *Sense*, *Reason*, and *Scripture*. (1.) To *Sense*, in that I both see and taste Bread and Wine in the Sacrament, and yet must believe it to be turn’d into the Flesh and Blood of Christ. I know I taste Bread, and yet must believe it the Flesh of Christ I eat; I know I taste Wine, and yet must believe it the Blood of Christ which I drink. (2.) How contrary is it to *Reason*, that the same Body should be in Heaven and Earth at the same time; yea, in a thousand places at once, and yet but one and the same Body? The Angel’s Argument to the Women coming to the Sepulcher to seek Christ, *He is not here, for he is risen*, Mat. 28. 6. clearly proves that Christ’s Body, after risen from the dead, could not be in two places at once: yea, that the same Body should be eaten by thousands, and yet remain at the same time whole and untouch’d; eaten by Men on Earth, and yet the same whole and untouch’d in Heaven; what Monsters of Absurdity are these? (3.) As for *Scripture*, the Apostle doubts not to call it Bread, after Consecration, and that three times in the same Chapter; 1 Cor. 11. 26, 27, 28. & 1 Cor. 10. 16.

6. Their

6. Their Prayer in an *unknown Tongue*, not understood by the common People; how contrary is it to the true Worship of God, which ought to be perform'd with *Understanding*, both our own, and those who join with us? 1 Cor, 14, 15, 16. But this is according to what their Doctor *Suarez* saith (in his Book of *Prayer*) that it is not essential to Prayer that a Man should think of what he says.

7. Their maintaining *Idolatrous Worship* for the true Worship, speaks them *Apostates* from the true Christian Religion: and this they are deeply guilty of, (1.) In their praying to *Saints* departed, and now in *Glory*; which being a part of Divine Worship, is to be perform'd to no other but to God, for that praying to *Saints* in Heaven, is a rendering that Worship to the Creature which belongs only to the Creator, and brings under the Guilt of Idolatry. And yet could this Charge of *Idolatry* (which cannot) be avoided, it is a part of the greatest Folly and Weakness imaginable; for they neither know us, nor can hear our Prayer, we being here on Earth, and they in Heaven: Isa. 63. 16. *Doubtless thou art our Father, tho Abraham be ignorant of us, &c.* (2.) Another part of Popish Idolatry, is their *Worship of Images*; so directly forbid in the second Commandment. Now if they say we worship them with an inferiour and lower Worship; *Answ. 1.* It is such a Worship as the Law of God expressly forbids, *Thou shalt not bow down thy self to them*, Exod. 20. 5. 2. It's so much as *Peter* reprov'd in *Cornelius*, and which the Angel would not suffer *John* to render to him; *Acts* 10. 25, 26. *Rev.* 19. 10. & 22. 8, 9. Yea, the three Children in *Dan.* 3. would rather venture upon the fiery Furnace, than yield to give such Worship to the golden Image that *Nebuchadnezzar* set up. (3.) Their worshipping the *Bread* in the Sacrament, saying (as was before-mention'd) that the Bread is turn'd into the *Body of Christ*: whereas it's expressly said, that *Christ* took [*Bread*] and brake it, and gave it to his *Disciples*, and said, *Take, eat, this is my Body, &c.* What *Christ* took, brake, and gave, the *Disciples* took and eat; and what more plain than that it was *Bread* which *Christ* took and brake, and they took and eat, as a Sign of *Christ's Body* broken for them? Now the *Papists* themselves confess, that if the Bread

be not converted into the Body of Christ, it were damnable Idolatry to worship it; but according to the Holy Scriptures, it is Bread still, after it is set apart for that use (as you heard before.) So that if Reason, Sense, or Faith, (according to the Scripture) may be Judg, it remains Bread, even after Consecration: and then what are the Papists in their worshipping of it, but (according to their own Confession) gross *Idolaters*?

8. That Religion which builds up and maintains it self by Force of *Arms*, yea, by *Murders*, *Blood*, and *Cruelty*, is not the true Christian Religion: but such is the *Popish*; witness the continual Designs and Practices of *Papists* for building up their Kingdom, and promoting their Religion in the World, by Blood and Cruelty; and the Pope's approving and encouraging the Murders and *Masacres* of *Protestants*, for establishing that accursed thing, *Popery*.

9. That which equals *Human Traditions* to, yea, prefers and exalts them above the Holy Scriptures, is not the true Christian Religion. But this doth the *Popish*, which requires a more strict Observation of the Pope's Canons and Traditions of their Fathers, than of the Laws of Christ given forth and made known to us in the Scriptures of Truth; yea, and accounts it a greater Sin, in some things, to offend against the former, than against the latter. Deeply are the *Papists* guilty of that Charge of our Saviour against the *Pharisees*, Mark 7. 7, 8, 9. which their very Religion leads them to, persuading it is no Sin, but their Duty, thus to *make the Word of no effect thro their Traditions*. And whereas they boast of Antiquity for them, we have Scripture-Antiquity for whatsoever we own as Matters of Faith and Practice, wherein we differ from them; and whatsoever is later than this, is to be accounted *novel*, and to be rejected. Yea, many of their most able Doctors confess, that divers of the peculiar Doctrines of the Church are *new*, and *unknown* to the antient Fathers, *viz.* that of *Indulgences*, *Purgatory*, *Communion in one kind*, *praying in a strange Tongue*, *Transubstantiation*, the receiving some of the *Apocryphal Books*, the Pope's *Supremacy* and *Infallibility*, worshipping of *Images*, denying to the common People their reading the Scriptures in their *own Tongue*, with some others.

Besides

Besides the Decrees of their Popes, and the Canons of their Popish Councils (which they hold to be Articles of Faith) they own and maintain a *new Creed*, made by the Council of Trent, and confirm'd by Pope Pius IV. *Anno 1564* tho the Apostle says, *If we or an Angel from Heaven preach any other Gospel than that which we have preach'd to you, let him be accursed*; Gal. 1. 8. The Sum of it is, to believe in the Pope, and his Papal Definitions, and instead of keeping the Commands of God, to uphold his Tyranny and maintain his Supremacy. They say it's possible to keep the whole Law of God; tho the Scripture says, *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from my Sin?* Prov. 20. 9. They have also a distinction of Venial and Mortal Sins; tho Christ assures us, that *of every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment*; Mat. 12. 36. The Sins of Lying, ordinary Swearing, Fornication, &c. they account venial; which is an Inlet to much Looseness and Profaneness. And there is not a Commandment of the Decalogue (which our Saviour says *he came not to destroy, but to fulfil*) but they have either wholly left out (as they have done the *Second Commandment*) or else miserably perverted and abus'd, by their own corrupt Glosses which they have put upon them. They have instituted new Sacraments, without a divine Warrant; and to other Inventions of their own, they impute spiritual Effects, and promise not only temporal Blessings, but spiritual Graces, and Remission of some Sins to those that use them. Of this nature are their *Holy Water, Paschal Wax, Oil, Holy Bread, Holy Medals, Beads, &c.*

I have enlarg'd the more on the so gross and notoriously impious *Errors* of the Papists, having great cause to fear the Popish Priests and Emissaries of the Romish Church have of late years swarm'd so much among us: they compass Sea and Land to gain Proselytes, and have been long endeavouring restlessly, by all the Ways and Arts imaginable, to root out the true Christian Protestant Religion, both out of the *Nation*, and (if possible) out of the *World*. It concerns therefore (now especially) all that fear the Lord, and that have any Concern for his Honour and Interest, and for our holy Religion, to be upon their watch and guard against them, to

consider one another, and to teach, and exhort, and endeavour to build up one another in our most holy Faith, and in all Duties of the Gospel.

C H A P. XV.

*Some other particular reigning and customary Sins,
which are to be especially watch'd against.*

I. PRIDE. And here I shall shew,

1. What is not to be accounted Pride: (1.) When a Man in Authority having a Spirit suitable to his Place and Work, does without a pusillanimous Fear of Men, and by Faith eying God, and designing to please him, do his Duty *courageously*, leaving Issues and Events to him: This is not Pride, but a Christian *Courage and Resolution*.

2. When Magistrates, Parents, or Masters, maintain the Honour of their *Place and Degree*, and keep that Distance from their Inferiours that is needful for their Good, and that the Inferiours may pay them that Reverence and Respect which is requir'd of them. This is behaving a Man's self worthily in his place.

3. When we prefer the Commands of *God* before the Commands of *Men*, and will not obey them for fear of their Displeasure, if they are not agreeable to the reveal'd Will of God.

4. When one hath a due and honest Care to uphold his Credit, good Name, and Reputation, not merely for it self, but to render him more useful and serviceable to God in his Generation.

5. When we plainly and seriously reprove another out of a true *Desire* of his *Reformation*; this is an excellent Christian Duty, tho too much neglected. But that we may be assisted in discovering this Sin, I shall shew, in the next place, what Pride is.

Pride in general is an inordinate, self-exalting, and over-valuing *our selves*, as if we were wiser and better than indeed we are; and an eager Desire that others should so think and speak of us, and treat us. This inordinate Self esteem, and Vanity of Mind, manifests it self;

1. When

to be more especially watch'd against. 485

1. When we assume that *Honour* to our selves that ought to be ascrib'd to God only; as *Herod* did, when applauded by the People, *Acts* 12. 26, &c.

2. When we are too highly *conceited* of our own Knowledge, Wit, Wisdom, Care and Contrivance, ascribing our Successes to that, and so sacrifice to our own Net; not acknowledging the special Favour and Providence of God therein, as we ought to do: *Deut.* 8. 13, 14, 17, 18.

3. When we contemn, slight, scorn, and undervalue others, crying up what we do our selves, but despising and vilifying what is done by others.

4. When we are apt to be very angry and cholerick at any thing that agrees not with our *own Humour*, and are impatient to be contradicted, be our Speech right or wrong: *Prov.* 21. 24.

5. When we are apt to be *contentious* and *quarrelsome*, and that upon small matters; *Prov.* 13. 10. *Only by Pride cometh Contention*: and *Prov.* 28. 25.

6. When Men are heady, self-will'd, headstrong, and unpersuadable, tho never so great Reasons may be offer'd them, thinking themselves wiser than others.

7. When we *affect Singularity* (without reason) that we may be the more taken notice of. Indeed good Men are sometimes compel'd to be singular (as *Lot* was in *Sodom*) but they do not affect it, could they avoid it without Sin.

8. When we are censorious and uncharitable, loving to carp and find fault with others, and are not so quick-sighted to see our *own* Failings, as the Failings of *others*.

9. When we will not confess a Fault, nor retract an Error, tho convinc'd of it; but out of height of Spirit justify and defend it.

10. When we think slightly of great Mercies, and undervalue them, because others enjoy greater.

11. When we are apt to be discontented, to murmur and repine, if we *have* not *all* we desire, and that all things go not according to our wills.

12. When we are apt to *fret* and be *impatient* under the Afflictions that God lays upon us, not considering how much more our Sins deserve.

13. When we *envy* the Parts and Gifts, the Employments and Places, or the Credit and Reputation of others, thinking our selves diminish'd thereby.

14. When we are more careful about the Outside than the Inside of our Duties, and are more solicitous how we are liked and approved by Men, than how we have approved our Hearts and Consciences to God.

15. When we are impatient of *Reproof*, and of that Discipline Christ hath appointed in his Church, with respect to those that offend; as *Mat. 18. 15, 16, 17.* Proud Persons are impatient of any Restraint, thereby to be controll'd, or to be barr'd from any Ordinances upon that account.

16. When we are very hard to be pleas'd, and are too rigid Exactors of Observance and Respect from others.

17. When we love others, not according to their true Worth, but according to the measure of *Respect* they shew and pay to us.

18. Proud Persons are usually most injurious both in Words and Actions towards *weak* Adversaries.

19. Proud Persons are very *resentful* of Injuries, either real, or suppos'd to be done to them; and when they are wronged, they look for great Submission and Satisfaction.

20. Pride makes People exceeding loath to be beholden to others: some will almost starve, rather than make their Wants known.

21. The Pride of the Heart often manifests it self in the Vanity of the Garb and Attire.

22. Pride makes People (many times) slight their Ministers, and to hear their Teachers as Judges, not as Learners of them.

23. Pride often makes those in place apt to *domineer* over their Inferiours, and to think of their Dignity more than the Duty they owe to God, and to those that are under them, when in such places.

24. Pride makes People spend profusely for their *Credit* sake, but backward enough, when Objects of Charity call for their help. Their Estates are more at the command of their *Credit*, than of *God*.

Now the great Evil, Malignity, and Danger of this Sin, appears many ways: For,

1. Consider, Pride is a very *destructive Sin*; it ruin'd *Angels*, 1 Tim. 3. 6. and our first Parents. It was the Sin that overthrew *Babel*, drowned *Pharaoh*, destroy'd *Goliath*, hang'd *Haman*, made *Nebuchadnezzar* like a Beast,

Beast, caus'd *Herod* to be eaten up with Lice. God threatens he will destroy the House of the Proud, *Prov.* 15. 25.

2. 'Tis a very disquieting Sin; (1.) Of a Man's own Soul: every little thing casts a proud Man into a Passion, it renders his Life miserable, and puts him in the power of any Man to be his Tormentor. A small Neglect or Affront disorders a proud Man, even almost to Distraction; as *Haman*, *Esther* 3. 5. It's a great occasion of *Disquiet* in Families, Parishes, &c. and makes Men very Firebrands in the Places where they live, full of Animosity against those that cross them in any thing, and full of Envy at those that are above them; they are troublesome both in Church and State. Look also upon the lamentable Effects of it in the World: O cursed Pride, thou Child of the Devil, how dost thou set the whole World on fire, by woful Divisions, Contentions, and Mischiefs!

3. Pride usually blasts *Parts*, it blinds the Mind, and is often the high-way to *Apostacy*; it hating Admonition and Reproof, keeps from the proper Remedy and Means of Reformation.

4. It is the Mother and Root of many other Sins; as of *Passion*, *Envy*, *Revenge*, *Oppression*, *Contention*, and hard and injurious Dealing.

5. 'Tis a very extensive Sin; it's apt to shoot it-self into our whole Conversation, and, which is saddest of all, to creep into our best Duties: There's scarce a good Action we do, but this cursed Fly will be apt to get into it, and poison it, if we take not great care, and watch our Hearts very strictly.

6. It's a great Hindrance of Conversion. A proud Person is hardly convinc'd of the Greatness of his Sins; original Sin will scarce be acknowledg'd by him, and he thinks but slightly of his actual Sins, and he is hardly brought to see the necessity of converting Grace, and his absolute need of a Saviour.

Now to give some Remedies and Directions against this Sin:

1. Enter into a serious Consideration of your own Vileness; not only of your first Make and Mould out of the Earth, to which you are to return again, and of the Infirmities, Weaknesses and Sickneses which your Body in the mean time is liable to: but especially the great Depravedness

pravedness of your better part. Think of your manifold Sins, and of the Desert of them, and of that Fountain of Sin and Iniquity in your Heart, wherein remains so much Enmity against God, and Corruption; which is so loathsome in his sight, and which nothing but the Blood of Christ can cleanse you from : *Psal. 51. 5.*

2. Meditate often on the glorious *Nature* and *Attributes* of God, his Infinite Greatness, Holiness and Purity; and that is one good means to humble and abase us, and make us to abhor our selves : *Job 42. 5, 6.*

3. Consider how God declares that he *hates, abhors,* and *resists* a proud Person : *Prov. 16. 5. He resists the Proud,* but his Grace and Favour is towards the Lowly; and the *Proud in Heart is an Abomination to the Lord.*

4. Look upon the great Imperfection of your Graces, and the manifold Failings of your best Duties; *ex ignorantia tui, venit superbia.*

5. Look upon an humble Saviour. *Nulla Creatura humilior Deo,* says one excellently; the most powerful fight in the World for the humbling of the Soul, is a crucify'd Saviour, whose whole Life was a constant Lecture of Humility : *John 13.*

6. Look on the holy Angels, how they humble themselves, and minister to the People of God, who are so much their Inferiours.

7. Look upon the Examples of the most eminent Saints, and you will find they were eminent in this Grace of Humility, as *Abraham, Gen. 18. 27. Jacob, Gen. 32. 10. David, 2 Sam. 7. 18, 19.*

8. Look upon the Devils themselves, that tempt you to be proud; see what Pride hath brought them to: a proud Man is the very Image of the Devil. Pride, Malice, Hatred, and Lying are the Devil's peculiar Sins; and can you be contented to be like him?

9. Consider how God usually leaves proud Persons to themselves, at one time or other, and suffers them to fall into some Sin or Miscarriage, that they may be abas'd and humbled. One indiscreet Action of a Person left to himself, may throw down the Reputation that he hath by great Caution and Circumspection been many years in raising, and make him vile in the eyes of the World.

10. Consider that those that are proud are usually near some dreadful Fall, or heavy Judgment. God himself

Self hath made Pride a Symptom or Prognostick of it ;
Luke 14. 11. & 1. 51.

11. Let us reason our selves into a loathing of this Sin. Ask thy self, What art thou? What hast thou? What canst thou do, that thou should be proud? (1.) Is it thy *Birth*? Imitate thy Parents if vertuous, else thou art a Dishonour to them; if great in the World, and vicious, no reason to boast of thy Descent from them. (2.) Is it *Riches*? the greater will be our Account, *Mark 10. 23, 24.* and few escape the Snare; thy Account and Danger should rather make thee fear, than thy Riches lift thee up: besides, many Accidents may impoverish thee, and at most thou canst carry them no further than the Grave. (3.) Is it *Power*? the very Thoughts how that Talent has been improv'd, whether for God or against him, may affright any considering Man. (4.) Is it *Learning* thou hast, the more humble thou oughtest to be? True Knowledg discovers the Folly and pernicious Tendency of Pride, and affords abundant Matter for Humility: the fullest and most weighty Heads of Corn bow down, whilst the empty ones perk up themselves; and how little is it the most Learned and Knowing know, of what they might and ought to know. (5.) Is it *Beauty*, or bodily Strength? possibly the Disease is now breeding that will suddenly pull down thy Strength, and deface thy Beauty: It may be observ'd, that that which raises Pride, is commonly short-liv'd; but be truly thankful for them, and do not abuse them. (6.) Is it *Wit*, or *natural Parts* and Understanding? how quickly may a Fever, or other Distemper, soon deprive thee of them? or the Sin it self lead thee into some reproachful Action, which is often the Fruit of Pride, and casts a Blot upon the greatest Parts: but Humility and Lowliness of Mind is of great Advantage for the improving all our Faculties. (7.) Is it *Credit*, *Applause*, *Honour*, or *Esteem*? the Wind it self is not more uncertain. If I think I have Honour, I deceive my self; it's in his keeping that gives it, and he may detain it when he pleases. (8.) Is it *Grace* I am proud of? that indeed is of the greatest value: but Pride of that is very irrational and absurd; for predominant Pride is a great sign of a graceless State. If I have Grace, so far as I am proud of it, I abuse it, contradict it, and act against the
very

very Nature of it; Pride being to Grace, as a Consumption to the Body, which is destructive to it: *Rom. 11. 20. 1 Cor. 10. 12.*

12. Look on the humbling Judgments of God abroad in the World, and turn them all against thy *Pride*. A bounding Sin and Profaneness in most Places, together with the Contempt of God and serious Piety, calls to humbling and abasing our selves; and the Posture of Affairs so lately in our own Nation, has made this Duty altogether seasonable; and Pride and Vanity has had no colour to shew its Face, were it not a Sin so monstrous and daring as it is, what Arguments soever should be us'd against it.

13. Consider how God, in contriving Man's *Redemption*, designs the *humbling* of all whom he intends to save; having ordain'd that none shall be justify'd by a Righteousness of his own, but by the Satisfaction, Merits, and Intercession of the Redeemer: and by humbling Men, and making them vile in their own eyes, he prepareth them for the Reception of his pardoning Mercy.

14. Read what Christ expects from them whom he intends to save, and you will see how great a measure of Humility and Self-denial is requir'd of them: *Mat. 18. 3. Except ye become as little Children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*

15. Treasure up some *Scripture-Precepts* against *Pride*, and have them always ready in your Minds; such as these, *He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted*, *Mat. 23. 12.* but *God resisteth the Proud*, *James 4. 6.* See *Prov. 16. 5. & 29. 23.*

16. Earnestly beg of the Lord, to work in you, and increase more and more that excellent Grace of Humility, Another Sin to be especially watch'd against, is,

II. DISCONTENT.

This is an unquiet Frame of Heart under our present Condition, expressing it self in murmuring and repining thereat. The great Evil whereof appears in that,

1. 'Tis a quarrelling the Wisdom of God, and a secret accusing and taxing his Providence, as if he did not wisely order the Lots and Conditions of his People. Holy *Job*, under his great Afflictions, was far from this Temper; tho he suffer'd so deeply, yet he charg'd not

to be more especially watch'd against. 491

God with Folly in that severe Dispensation towards him, but said, *The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the Name of the Lord*; Job I. 21, 22.

2. 'Tis a quarrelling his fatherly Care over us, as if he had no Love or Regard of us.

3. Of his Faithfulness, as if he would not perform his many gracious Promises.

4. It's a secret accusing of his Justice, as if he dealt hardly with us, and punish'd us more than our Sins deserved.

5. 'Tis a Carriage very unworthy the Hope and Expectation of a Christian, from that gracious Covenant which he is under.

6. It's answerable to the Experience we have had of God's former gracious Dealings with us, and helping us out of Straits and Difficulties.

7. 'Tis a great Gratification of Satan (who is a male-contented Spirit himself) thus to murmur against our Creator; it renders us like him, who is restless and unquiet always, in his Opposition to God, and always fretting at his Dispensations.

8. It's a Means of betraying us to great Temptations; the Devil scarce ever has so great power over any, as over those that are discontented. It's a Stock he uses to graft his Temptations upon, and draws some thereby to do such things against themselves, that even Nature abhors; he is never more busy about any, than such Persons, and would desire no greater Advantage against a Soul, than to find it in such a repining and unquiet Temper.

9. It exceedingly unfits us for holy Duties, and that Service we might otherwise do for God and Man; so that all that love themselves should beg of God to keep them, and should watch daily over themselves as to this particular Sin. For consider farther,

(1.) 'Tis vain and bootless. If the Evils and Miseries we fret and vex our selves at, are such as we cannot remedy, our Duty then is Patience and Submission; but if they are remediable, let us observe our Duty, in the diligent use of Means, according to the Divine Appointment in order to it. (2.) It takes away the Comforts of what we enjoy: many Mercies, in which we ought to rejoice, and be truly thankful for, are bury'd in the Ruins of it, all seeming as nothing to a discontented Spirit.

Spirit. (3.) It makes our Afflictions worse, as a Man in a Fever, by his tossing and tumbling, increases his Heat; or a Bird in the Lime-Twigs, which the more it flutters, the more it intangles it self. (4.) It provokes God often to send more and new Afflictions upon us, as on the *Israelites* in the Wilderness; as Children that are stomachful after whipping, commonly get another whipping for their pains. (5.) It makes our Lives very uneasy, both to our selves, and to our Relations, and all that are about us. But let us next consider wherein the Nature of Christian Contentment consists.

1. It is a sweet, quiet, gracious Frame of Spirit, freely submitting to God's all-wise and fatherly Disposal of us, in every Condition. It is not a Stoical Apathy, but may well consist with a due Sensibleness of God's Hand in afflicting us. The Apostle gives us an excellent Rule, *Heb. 12. 5.* how we should carry our selves under Afflictions of any kind; neither to *despise* nor *faint under them*; not to disregard and be insensible of God's Hand, when it is upon us; nor yet to sink in Spirit, or to faint and despond under it. 2. It may consist with an humble Complaint to God or Man: we may groan under our Afflictions, but ought not to grumble. 3. It may consist with our seeking out for Help and Ease in a lawful way, for that is our Duty, and God expects it from us; but those things that are contrary to this sweet and gracious Frame, are, (1.) Inward fretting, vexing, and tumultuation of Spirit, and rising of the Heart against God. (2.) Sinking of Spirit, desponding and despairing of Help. (3.) Outward murmuring and repining. (4.) Sinful Shifts to help our selves. Now consider the Amiability and Excellency of this Frame of Spirit:

1. It is a Temper highly pleasing to God, *1 Pet. 3. 4.* *It is in the sight of God of great Price:* and that must needs be very excellent, which is by God himself so highly esteem'd.

2. This Grace is a Constellation, a Cluster of many Graces; as of Faith, Patience, Humility, and Self-denial: where this is, there are (we may assure our selves) many Graces exercis'd.

3. It is a Frame of Spirit that honours God, in acknowledging him as our Lord and Owner, and his plenary Dominion over us; and it's very comely and fit that

that we, who receiv'd our Life and Being from him, should chearfully own his Sovereignty and Dominion over us.

4. It's a Temper of Spirit that will be greatly rewarded, it being the measure of our Obedience to God; which will be answerably recompens'd; and besides, even here, such a placid quiet Frame of Heart makes our Lives easy and delightful, and so carries its Reward along with it. Now in order to the strengthening of this excellent Grace,

(1.) Be mortifying Pride daily, which is at the Root of this Sin; compare your Sufferings and your Sins together, and consider not so much what you feel, as what you deserve.

(2.) Consider how many Mercies and Blessings you daily enjoy, and stir up your self to be exceeding thankful for them, and that will drive away your Discontent; for Thankfulness and Discontent cannot stand together. Think of your Mercies therefore, whenever you are tempted to Unquietness.

(3.) Consider wherein the Happiness of Man consists, and labour to secure that Happiness to your self. Measure it not by the Opinion of worldly Men, nor by your Success about worldly things: It consists in our Reconciliation with God, thro Christ; in the conformity of our Natures to him; in living holily and righteously before him in his Love and Favour; and being serviceable to him in our Generation, according to his Will: if it be thus with us, we are happy; whatever our Condition be in this World. That is really and truly good for us, which makes us better; and that is indeed evil to us, which makes us worse: and ordinarily we receive more hurt by Prosperity, than by Adversity.

(4.) Look downward on those beneath you, and not upward on those above you. It's very ill-natur'd, and judging at random, to think our selves miserable, because others have higher Enjoyments than our selves. Look into the World, and how many thousands will you find, with whom you would be loath to change Conditions; nay, consider how many of God's own Children have endur'd and suffer'd much more than you have done. He that hath his Understanding and all his Senses intire, hath therein an Over-balance to most outward Adver-

Adversities. Let us not murmur at what we lose, but be very thankful for what we have left.

(5.) Consider no Affliction comes out of the Dust; none happen to us, but are reach'd out by the Hand of a merciful Creator and tender Father, to whom we owe Subjection, as having receiv'd our Being, and all our other Mercies from him. No Warrant comes to arrest our Bodies with Pain or Sickneſs, or to remove any Friend or Relation from us, but it comes under the Hand and Seal of Heaven. Let us look therefore beyond the Instruments, for they are but the Servants to put the Cup into our Hands, which our heavenly Father hath given us to drink.

(6.) Let us consider what part God hath appointed every one of us to act in this World, and labour to act that part well, not troubling our selves about those of others. Let each consider duly the Place and Station God hath put him in, and the Part and particular Duties he requires of him, and set himself with all Faithfulness to perform them; not murmuring that he hath not the part that is given to another.

(7.) Enjoy present Comforts thankfully, and be not over-sollicitous about the future. Cast all your Cares on God, who has promis'd never to leave nor forsake those that are his; *Heb. 13. 5.*

(8.) Interpret all God's Providences so, as intended to draw you nearer to himself, and none of them to drive you away from him. *In very Faithfulness hast thou afflicted me, saith David, Psal. 119. 75.* God has very gracious Ends in afflicting his People; it is one of the most awakening Calls to Repentance, and to this end God usually designs it, as *Hosea 5. 15.* Joseph's Brethren are a great Instance of it, *Gen. 42. 21.* God also, by sanctify'd Afflictions, calls for the exercise of our Graces, and will crown and reward the exercise of those Graces which he himself hath planted in us. By Afflictions also he crucifies his Peoples Hearts to the World; as Nurses do, so God oftentimes embitters the World to his own Children, to wean them from it. He quickens and excites the Spirit of Prayer often by Afflictions; as in *Jonah* in the Whale's Belly, *Daniel*, the *Three Worthies* in the fiery Furnace, &c. and he conforms them also hereby unto his Son, who was a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief; *Iſa. 53. 3.*

(9.) Take

(9.) Take heed of all eager and inordinate Desires, they are very dangerous, when vehement and intemperate; commonly God crosses them, or the thing so desired may be cursed to us. Strong Affections breed strong Afflictions; we see not what that Person, or that Place, or that Thing we so eagerly desire, may prove. When therefore we find such Longings in our selves, after any worldly things, we should be afraid of them, and check them, as foreboding Ill to us. Alas! we are very unfit Chusers for our selves: and besides, these eager Desires after worldly things, do shame and aggravate the Weakness of our spiritual Desires.

(10.) This Lesson of true Christian Contentment being taught only in the School of Christ, let us be willing to put our selves under his Teaching. St. Paul learnt this Lesson here, *Phil.* 4. 12, 13. This he teaches,

1. By the Precepts of his Word, whereby he enjoins and commands it, *Luke* 21. 19. *1 Tim.* 6. 11. *James* 1. 4. *2 Pet.* 1. 6.

2. He teaches it by his Promises: He hath made many gracious Promises in his Word, which are a great means to support his People, and to frame their Hearts to Contentation in every Condition, which we should have recourse to upon every occasion. And,

3. He teaches this Lesson by his Spirit: (1.) By convincing the Soul of the Reasonableness of it. (2.) By strengthening our Faith in the Promises of God. (3.) By strengthening our Hearts to bear the Burden of Afflictions; *Eph.* 3. 16. *Col.* 1. 11. *2 Tim.* 1. 7. (4.) He teaches it by his own Example, *Mat.* 11. 29. How ready was he to comply with his Father's Will? *John* 18. 11. *Luke* 22. 42. *1 Pet.* 2. 21.

(11.) As a means to moderate your Desires after worldly things, and tho God cut you short as to any of them, think often of your Portion which is in the other Life.

(12.) Be humble under a Sense of your own Weakness, and earnestly beg Strength from Christ (who is our Strength) to enable you to be content in every Condition. Our Strength both for doing and suffering the Will of God, is in and from him; *Psal.* 131. 3. And when you are strengthen'd to this Duty, give all the Glory of it to him; be not secure in your own Strength. To conclude this Head; take Mr. Herbert's pious Counsel, pag. 131.

Content thee, greedy Heart!

*Modest and moderate Joys, to those that have
Title to more hereafter when they part,
Are passing brave.*

*Let but the upper Springs into the low
Descend, and fall, and thou dost flow.*

*What tho some have a Fraught
Of Cloves and Nutmegs, and in Cinnamon sail;
If thou hast wherewithal to spice a Draught,*

*When Griefs prevail,
And for the future time art Heir
To th' Isle of Spices, is't not fair?*

III. RASH ANGER.

Anger is the rising up of the Heart in a Displeasure, upon the apprehension of some Injury or Wrong offer'd to us, or those for whom we are concern'd; and it is either good or evil, according to the Circumstances that attend it. It is good,

1. When the Cause is good and warrantable, such as we can give a good Account of to God, *Mark 3. 5.* when it's accompany'd with Grief, because God is dishonour'd, or that any offend against Piety, Justice, Humanity, neglect or hurt their own or others Souls, or do any thing that is wicked or sinful.

2. When the Object is right; not the Person offending, but his Offence; his Sin, Folly, Fault, &c. these we may be angry at, yea hate, but not the Offender's Person.

3. When it aims at a right End; the Reformation of the Person offending.

4. When there is no Excess in the Measure or Time of it, but that Reason commands; and it is neither too hot nor too long, but is rational and temperate.

Now that our Anger at all times may be rightly regulated, that we may not offend therein, take these following Directions:

1. Make account every day, that you may meet with many Occasions that will be apt to provoke you, if you be not very watchful over your self; some unexpected Injuries or Trouble, which (without great care and taking heed to your self) may disorder and discompose you.

2. Con-

2. Consider your self as subject to manifold Errors and Failings; and we must not expect to meet or converse with any, totally free from Failings and Infirmities: *In many things we offend all*, James 3. 2. Keep alive therefore a Sense of your own Weakness, and what need you have of Forgiveness daily, both from God and Man; and this will dispose you more to Patience towards others.

3. Take heed of being soon angry. *He that is soon angry, dealeth foolishly*, Prov. 14. 17. Give leave to your Judgment to consider before you are angry; *The Discretion of a Man deferreth his Anger*, Prov. 19. 11. *Augustus* was advis'd to say over the Greek Alphabet, when inclin'd to be angry; and it's a shame to us if our Christianity do not more than the Heathens did, towards the curing these Irregularities of our Practice. See Prov. 16. 37. & James. 1. 19.

4. Be not angry upon every trivial occasion: *He that is angry without Cause, is in danger of the Judgment*; Mat. 5. 22. We must not be angry for mere involuntary and casual Offences, nor for any thing that is not material in it self, or in its Consequents.

5. Take heed you be not angry too often, whereby it grows into Contempt, and works no good effect. Anger must be us'd as a Medicine, only now and then, and that only upon just occasion.

6. Take heed it be not too vehement and excessive: it must be serious indeed, and have some Life and Warmth in it, that it may be effectual for the Amendment of the offending Person, and a warning to him to avoid the like Faults for the future: but take heed of all Excesses and Transports of Passion, so as for a Man *ire ex se*, to go out of our selves.

7. In your Anger, make no rash Vows or Resolutions, as that you will not trust, or have to do with such a Person again, &c. Such sudden, rash, and desperate Resolutions are very dangerous, and usually Men have cause to repent of them very quickly after.

8. In your Anger, be sure to reveal no Secrets formerly committed to your Trust: thereby you become a Bankrupt for Society ever after; for who will care to confide in such a one for the future?

9. Take heed of bitter provoking Speeches when you are angry. When you find your Heart begin to be hot

within you, then watch over your self especially; and either be silent (which is a good means to preserve your Innocence) or else give a soft Answer: *for a soft Answer putteth away Wrath, but grievous Words stir up Anger*, Prov. 15. 1. And, Prov. 17. 27. *He that hath Understanding, spareth his Words*; is of a cool and excellent Spirit. And, Prov. 21. 23. the Wiseman tells us, *As Coals are to burning Coals, and Wood to Fire, so is a contentious Man to kindle Strife*. As Fire cannot long continue, if the Wood and Fuel be taken from it; so neither will Anger long endure, if Words and cross Answers be not multiply'd: Prov. 25. 15. *A soft Answer breaketh the Bone*. Thus Abigail appeas'd David's Anger, 1 Sam. 25. 24. and therefore well might the Wiseman say, Prov. 21. 23. *Who so keepeth his Mouth and his Tongue, keepeth his Soul from Troubles*.

10. Do not peremptorily break off any Business in a Fit of Anger. Consider that nothing can be done in Passion, but may be done better without it; for Passion usually blinds the Mind, hinders due Consideration, and the Use of Reason, and thereby exposes the Person to do things very unreasonable.

11. Consider beforehand with your self what are the usual Causes of Anger, that so you may take heed of, and avoid them; as,

(1.) Pride is often a Cause. Proud and high-minded Men are usually apt to be angry, and to conceive great Indignation, if their Judgments and Understandings are not submitted unto, and their Wills and Pleasures comply'd with: Prov. 13. 10. & 21. 24.

(2.) An Opinion of being contemn'd. To prevent this sinful Anger therefore, sever whatever Injuries you receive (as much as you can) from the apprehension of Contempt and Malice, and impute them to Rashness, Weakness, or Inconsiderateness; any thing rather than Contempt, which the Nature of Man can so hardly bear.

(3.) Covetousness. They that are eager after the World, and have their Hearts set upon earthly things, are apt to be very angry when things fall out cross to their Minds; and every little Trespas and Loss touches them to the quick, and maketh them impatient.

(4.) Overmuch Niceness and Delicateness. Such Persons are subject to be angry: they that are rich and great in

in the World, many times take liberty from thence to give Scope to their Passions; which not only disturb themselves, but those about them; and make their own Lives uneasy to them.

(5.) Weakness, and overmuch Tenderness of Spirit: Anger usually reigns most in weak Persons, Aged, and Sick, in Women, and Children; we should therefore fortify our Minds, that they may not have too quick a Sense of Injuries, nor be so tender and weak as to be moved at every Toy.

(6.) Groundless Suspicions: They that are apt to be jealous and suspicious, are also very apt to be angry, tho commonly upon search they find no true Cause or Ground for it.

(7.) Credulity, and an easy Belief of Reports and listening to Tale-bearers, is another Cause of Anger. Take heed therefore of being over-inquisitive about such Reports, as may occasion an Uneasiness, and dispose you to Anger.

12. Represent to your self the Odiousness and Deformity of Anger. One says, Did an angry Man see his Face in a Glass, surely he would never fall in love with himself; so deform'd a sight is a Man in a great Fit of Anger or Rage! his Tongue, his Eyes, his Mouth, his Hands and Voice, all speaking aloud the great Disorder and Confusion of his Spirit.

13. Represent to your self the mischievous nature of intemperate Anger.

(1.) It's a great Enemy both to the Mind and Body: It kills the Mind with Vexation and Discontent, unfits for holy Duties, or any Communion with God, or Benefit by his Ordinances: And for the Body, it inflameth the Blood, and stirs up those noxious Humours in it which cause Diseases. Nothing doth sooner cut the Thread of Life, than the sharpness of fretting Anger and Grief; and besides this, it robs us of our inward Peace. Hence it is said, an angry Man seldom wants Woe.

(2.) It's a great Disquieter of private Families and Societies of Men; it disarms the Soul of its chief Defence, which is Reason and Consideration, and therefore may well be call'd a short Madness. How many dreadful Sins have by this means been committed in one Hour? It's the Devil's Engine to kindle Mens Corruptions, and

set the World on fire: *An angry Man aboundeth with Transgressions*, says Solomon, Prov. 29. 22. How many thousands hath intemperate Anger wrong'd and injur'd, hurt and wounded; yea, sometimes destroy'd and murder'd? And what mischief hath it not been guilty of?

It's also a great Disquieter of the Church. Where Religion is in reality, it breathes in Meekness, Patience, Forbearance and Forgiveness; and yet so powerful is the Pride and Corruption of Mens Hearts, that there are no Controversies manag'd with so much Bitterness, Sharpness and Exasperation, as the Controversies about Religion are. If we cast our eye on the late Disputes between the Conformists and Dissenters, we shall quickly see what abundance of intemperate Heat and Anger, of Ill-will and Uncharitableness, appear in some of those Writings. None care to go to a Physician who will rail at him, and revile him, and tell him he is not worthy to live, and it were better the World were rid of him: and yet thus do some Men treat those whose Information they pretend to desire, and to reduce them into the right way. Certainly it's the Duty of all real Christians, who agree in the Fundamentals of Religion, to forbear one another in matters of less moment, and which belong not to the Vitals of Christianity: for we are all apt to mistake in some things, and cannot see with any body's Eyes but our own. And what horrible Uncharitableness is it to say, that any one is wilfully blind, who opens his Eyes as wide as another can? We must all see for our selves, and judg for our selves and our own Practice, and make account to answer to God for our selves: and therefore surely it would become us to be more charitable one towards another.

14. Let not Anger rest in your Bosom, lest it putrify, and turn into Malice and Hatred: *Anger resteth in the Bosom of Fools*, Eccles. 7. 9. Anger lodg'd in the Heart all night, is very like to become Malice by the Morning; therefore we must not let the Sun go down upon our Wrath, thereby giving place to the Devil, the Enemy of our Souls, and opening the door to him, who is so apt to intrude himself at all times without our help. Anger is a sudden Passion, and often only against the Offence; but Hatred and Malice flies at the Person, and is more durable and lasting, and earnestly desires their hurt.

15. Take

15. Take heed especially that your Anger do not sour into Revenge : For a Creature to avenge himself, is a plain Intrenchment upon God's Prerogative, *Rom. 12. 9.* who is the Judge as well as Creator of the World. We all stand in need of God's pardoning Mercy and Forgiveness daily; and except we forgive, we cannot expect to be forgiven, *Mat. 6. 14, 15.* An irreconcilable Temper is a dangerous sign of an ill state towards God. Our Saviour shews us the necessity of forgiving one another, by the Parable of a Servant to whom his Lord had forgiven so much, *Mat. 18. 23.* it's to be wish'd that Servant's Practice was not imitated too much in our days. And how sad must our Account be, when that is requir'd of us !

16. Take heed of Envy, be not angry or displeas'd at the Prosperity of others. To be pleas'd with another's Happiness, is to increase our own ; but *Envy is as Rotteness to the Bones*, *Prov. 14. 30.*

17. Represent to your self what a Beauty and Amiability there is in Meekness : which Grace hath reference either to God or Man. Meekness towards God consists in patiently submitting to his Will, without murmuring or repining ; Meekness towards Man consists in having a Heart ready to pass by Offences, to forgive Wrongs and Injuries, and to do good against evil. This Frame is of the most attractive nature. The great Amiability of Meekness will appear, if we consider,

(1.) It makes us like our blessed Lord and Saviour, who express'd his great Meekness in submitting to his Father's Will without any repining, and in bearing so patiently great Injuries from Men ; *Mat. 11. 29. Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart.* Our Saviour seems to say to us, as *Gideon* to his Followers, *Judges 7. 17. Look on me, and do as ye see me do.* And accordingly the Apostle, *2 Cor. 10. 1.* beseeches the *Corinthians*, by the *Meekness and Gentleness of Christ* (which he uses as a powerful Motive to them) that they would not interpret his humble and mild Carriage among them otherwise than they ought.

(2.) Gracious Meekness shews the Soul to have been under the Forming and Workmanship of the Spirit of God.

(3.) It's a Temper highly priz'd by God himself, *1 Pet. 3. 4. Moses's Meekness* exalted him so highly in the Fa-

vour of God, that he spake to him face to face, as a Man speaks to his Friend, Exod. 33. 11.

(4.) It's a Temper that much adorns our Christian Profession; 'tis a walking worthy of our high Calling: Eph. 4. 12, 31, 32. Col. 3. 12—15.

(5.) It's a Temper to which many gracious Promises are made; as *Psal. 25. 9. Mar. 5. 5. The Meek shall inherit the Earth*: Enjoy what God gives them here with much more Peace, Quietness, and Comfort than others do. If they are oppress'd at any time, God usually interests himself in their Quarrel; *Prov. 16. 7.* and if he sometimes permits them to be oppress'd (for the Exercise of their Faith and Patience) he will recompense them abundantly hereafter.

(6.) It's a Temper of great benefit to the Life of Man: it takes the edge off from Sufferings that they cannot hurt us; Fretting and Rage makes that troublesome to us, which else would not be so. As in the Case of reproachful Words, which in themselves hurt neither our Bodies nor Estates, but the great danger of them is if they drive us into Anger; for then our Anger may run us into abundance of other Sins: whereas he that meekly passes them by, is never the worse for them, nay the better (as God orders it) for he shall be rewarded for his Patience.

18. Be humbled seriously before the Lord for all former irregular and exorbitant Passions you have been guilty of, and seek pardon of them in the Blood of Christ, and pray earnestly to the Lord to keep you from falling into the like again; to give you that Wisdom which is from above, which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, and full of good fruits. And when you are surpriz'd on a sudden with any unexpected Accident, or violent Temptation, that is apt to disorder you; then send up a fervent Ejaculation to Heaven, as a speedy Messenger for Help and Succour in that time of Danger.

19. Set a high Price and Value upon Quietness, Meekness, and a calm Frame of Soul; *1 Thess. 4. 11. Study to be quiet, and do your own Business.* Say not your Afflictions are so great that you cannot bear them with patience, and that therefore (as *Jonah*) you do well to be angry, and that it's better to die than to live: nay but,

but, O Man, O Worm, who art thou that thus repliest against God? Let all Flesh be silent before him. *Aaron* had two Sons destroy'd at one stroke by Fire from Heaven, and both died (for ought appears to the contrary) in their Sin, which so exceedingly sharpen'd the Affliction; and yet the Text says, *Lev. 10. 3. Aaron held his peace*: he utter'd not a word of Murmuring or Discontent against the Almighty; this would be to throw a stone upward, that will be sure to fall upon his head that threw it. Shall a living Man complain? Man suffering for his Sin? God is always just, tho his ways to us are sometimes amazing and past our finding out.

Excuse not your Anger with pleading your Nature is cholerick, and therefore you cannot help falling into Passion: For such a Temper indeed may strongly dispose to Anger, but cannot necessitate you to it. We might by Prayer and Watchfulness bring our selves (thro Grace) into a better Temper, endeavouring seriously, in the strength of Christ, to mortify the Corruptions of our Hearts.

Lastly, Excuse not your sinful Anger with the Greatness of the Provocation, as that which Flesh and Blood cannot bear; for these, except renew'd and chang'd, cannot enter into the Kingdom of God: *1 Cor. 15. 50. And they that live after the Flesh, shall die, Rom. 8. 13. And they that are Christ's, have* (in some good degree, tho not all equally) *crucify'd the Flesh, with its corrupt Affections and Lusts*; *Gal. 5. 24.* Tho the other Person was indeed excessively angry with you, remember Fire is not to be quench'd with Fire, nor Anger with Anger. It's much more Christian-like to give place to Wrath, and overcome Evil with Good.

IV. COVETOUSNESS and Earthly-mindedness.

Covetousness is an inordinate and excessive Love of Riches, and an immoderate Desire and Hankering after them. The simple Desire of Riches, is not Covetousness, but an inordinate and over-greedy Desire of them; and therefore this Sin is especially in the Heart. One may have little, and yet be covetous; one may be rich, and yet free from Covetousness. This Sin of Covetousness discovers it self,

1. In getting Wealth unconscionably, without regard to Piety, Equity, Justice, Charity, or Humanity; when

Men have their Hearts so bent and set upon the World, that they use indirect means to get it, as Oppression, Over-reaching, Lying, &c.

2. In an undue detaining and with-holding from the Poor (thro Hardheartedness and Penuriousness) what is fit to be given to them; when a Man from hence gives not at all, or very little, and what is with difficulty extorted from him; when Men are continually hoarding up for themselves, and tho they have enough and abound, yet are inordinately carking and caring for more, but have no Bowels or Pity for the Poor, or for their indigent Relations; fearing they shall want hereafter, when they are old.

3. In spending too sparingly and niggardly: when they that have plentiful Estates, yet have not Hearts to allow themselves Necessaries, neither decent Apparel, nor convenient Food, pinching their own Bellies, and those they are to provide for: *Eccles. 6. 1, 2. & 4. 8.* The Causes or Spring of this Sin may be,

(1.) False Notions and Apprehensions about Riches, and too high an Esteem of the things of the World; thinking the Happiness of Man consists in these things: and upon this Conceit, Wealth so steals away their Hearts, that they make it their God. Hence Covetousness is call'd *Idolatry*, *Col. 3. 5.* The World hath little Judgment in the true Nature of Good and Evil; that is truly good which makes us better towards God, and that is evil for us which makes us worse. Indeed Riches, when honestly got, are God's Blessings, and so ought to be esteem'd by us; and we ought to be very thankful for them, and to use them according to his Will; but thro the Corruption of Man's Heart they are often Snares, and dangerous ones: *Eccles. 5. 13.* Riches without Grace usually hurt the Possessor, yea, and many others round about them; being means of their dishonouring God the more, and corrupting others by their Power and Wealth: *Mark 10. 23.* So dangerous is the having Riches, without Grace to make a right Use and Improvement of them.

(2.) Another Cause of this Sin is, Mens Diffidence and Distrust of God's fatherly Care and Providence over them. Ignorance of God, and Distrust of him, usually go together: *They that know thy Name, will put their Trust in thee, Psal. 9. 10.* that know thy Nature and Attributes,

tributes, how infinitely wise, gracious, merciful, faithful thou art; they will trust in thee: but those that know thee not, will not trust in thee, but in their own Wit, Wisdom, and Providence. Men usually take it very ill when they see they are not trusted; how much more may the great God of Heaven take it ill from us (his Creatures) when he sees we dare not trust him? It is an Engagement upon the Almighty (to speak with Reverence) to trust in him, to depend on him, and to cast our Cares on him; but it must needs be a great Provocation to him, to distrust him. Therefore our Saviour charges his Disciples, to *take no thought for their Life, what they should eat, &c.* not carkingly and inordinately; but that they seek in the *first place the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, and not to be over-anxious for other things, but believe that God in the use of lawful and fair means, will bestow them upon them, as far forth as he sees to be good for them.

(3.) Another Cause of Covetousness, is, Men live by Sense more than by Faith. See *Heb. 11. 2. & 2 Cor. 4. 18.* The true Christian chiefly minds the things unseen, the Men of the World chiefly the things seen: the one, things temporal; the other, things eternal. The true Christian lives in the believing Views of invisible things, and of the Excellency and Reality of them, and by Faith ascertains them to himself. The invisible Comforts and Recompences of the other Life, bore up the Martyrs Hearts against the Terrors of visible and present Torments. Now the Marks and Characters of such as are covetous and earthly-minded, may be such as these:

1. Such whose Knowledg and Skill lies only or chiefly about the things of the World. 2. Such as have their Hearts chiefly set upon them; they love and affect these things, as being sutable to their Spirits, with a prevailing predominant Love. Hence we are commanded, *1 John 2. 15. Not to love the World, nor the things of the World, &c.* not to set our Hearts and Affections on these things, on sensual Pleasures, Riches, Honours, and Preferments of it; yet these are adored by carnal Men. 3. Their Discourse is chiefly about these things; *1 John 4. 5. They are of the World, therefore speak they of the World.* Their Breath is earthy, which they say is a sign of Death; Discourse of spiritual things is usually unpleasing to

to them. 4. Their Pains and Endeavours are only, or chiefly, for the things of the World; rising early and sitting up late for the obtaining of them, accompany'd with a Neglect and Disregard of spiritual Duties, counting them a Weariness, as the Prophet speaks, *Mat. 1. 13.* 5. They are very careful to secure these things to themselves, but use no answerable Care to secure to themselves things eternal. 6. They are commonly very solicitous about their own private Interest, but little or nothing concern'd about the Interest of Christ or his Church. They are wholly for themselves, but little concern'd how it fares with the Church of God. Whereas we read of old *Eli*, *1 Sam. 4. 13.* that *his Heart trembled for the Ark of God*; which was the Symbol of his gracious Presence. 7. They make these outward things their Trust and Confidence, they set their prime Affections of Love and Trust upon them, in that measure which is only due to God; *Prou. 10. 16.* *Job 31. 24.* Their Confidence and Trust is taken off from God, and plac'd upon their Riches; *Psal. 52. 7.* *But this their way is their Folly*, and what God in his Word doth frequently dissuade us from; *1 Tim. 6. 17.* *Charge them that are rich in this World that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain Riches, but in the living God.* *Psal. 62. 10.* *If Riches increase, set not your Hearts upon them.* And our Saviour himself gives us this Precept, *Mat. 6. 19.* *Lay not up for your selves Treasures upon Earth, where Moth and Rust doth corrupt, &c. for where your Treasure is, there will your Hearts be also.* The great Evil of this Sin of Covetousness and Worldly-mindedness appears, in that,

1. It is a Sin the Scripture testifies very much against; it's call'd *Idolatry*, and *the Root of all Evil*, *Eph. 5. 5.* *Col. 3. 5.* *1 Tim. 6. 10.* It's the cause of Oppression, Extortion, and many other enormous Evils and Mischiefs in the World. There is scarce any Sin so base and vile, but he that is under the power of Covetousness will venture to commit it for gain and advantage: he whose Affections are thus inordinately set on Money, will not stick at the Breach of any of God's Commandments. *David* therefore prays especially against this Sin, *Psal. 119. 36.* *Incline my Heart to thy Testimonies, and not to Covetousness.* He might have said, not to Lust, Pride, &c. but it seems he look'd on Covetousness as a Mother-Sin, which

to be more especially watch'd against. 507

which was like to produce many other Sins wherever it prevail'd.

2. It's a very close Sin; it's hardly discern'd, and so more hardly cured: it hides it self sometimes under the Cloke of Frugality and good Husbandry. A Man may be free from unlawful Getting, from Deceit and Injustice, and yet be earthly-minded for all that.

3. It's a very insnaring Sin: *They that will be rich* (that is, that are resolv'd to be so by hook or crook) *fall into Temptation and a Snare*, 1 Tim. 6. 9. they will not stick to make shipwreck of their Consciences, to gain the World: and therefore Covetousness is many times the Root of Apostacy, 2 Tim. 4. 10. as it was in Demas.

4. It's a great Dishonour to the Christian Profession, for them that have Heaven set before them for a Reward, to dote upon the Earth; for those that profess to believe the surpassing Excellency of the things above, to have their Hearts and Affections set on things below. Psal. 135. 15. the Psalmist says, *The Idols of the Heathen are Silver and Gold*: but 'tis a shame that Silver and Gold should be the Idols of Christians. Therefore the Apostle warns the converted Colossians, Chap. 3. 1, 2. against it.

5. It much hinders profiting by the Word; Mat. 13. 23. *The Cares of this Life choak the Word*. And it's said of some, that *their Hearts go after their Covetousness*, Ezek. 33. 31. and so the Word profits them not.

6. If either Magistrate or Minister be under the power of it, they are never like to discharge their Duties faithfully: Exod. 18. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 2.

7. 'Tis a very disquieting Sin: they that covet after Mony, *pierce themselves through with many Sorrows*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. It creates also great Trouble and Disquiet to particular Families; *He that is greedy of Gain, troubleth his own House*, Prov. 15. 27. He makes his Children and Servants Drudges to the World.

Now to prescribe some Remedies against this Sin:

1. Labour to understand wherein the true Happiness of Man consists. Riches and Wealth are not the distinguishing Marks of the Love and Favour of God: Men may have them, and yet be of those, who have all *their Portion in this Life*, Psal. 17. 14. God indeed gives Riches to his own Children, that they may appear to be his Blessings; and to many of his own Children he denies them,

them, that they appear not to be his chief Blessings. Reconciliation with God, Conformity of our Natures to him, the having his Spirit dwelling in us, and being serviceable to him in our Generation, is that wherein our true Happiness consists, in and thro Christ: he that hath these is truly rich, tho he be poor in this World; and he that wants these, tho he flow in Riches, is for the present but a miserable Man, and in an unsafe Condition: according to that Divine Poet Mr. Quarles;

*It's Grace, not Gold, makes great; sever but which,
The rich Man will be poor, the poor Man rich.*

2. The Children of God ought to have a great Confidence in God's fatherly Care over them. We are much press'd in Scripture to cast our Care on God; *Psal. 55. 22. Cast thy Burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.* 1 Pet. 5. 7. *Cast all your Care on him, for he careth for you.* Mat. 6. 31. *Take no thought, &c.* What makes Children and Servants less solicitous and anxious in their Parents and Masters House, than when they are for themselves? Why, they depend on their Parents and Masters to provide for them, and that sets them at ease. And should not we then depend on the Care and Providence of our Heavenly Father? trust him for our Bodies as well as for our Souls, considering the many gracious Promises he has made to take care of us? The Apostle argues from thence against Covetousness, and that we should be content with such things as we have, because God hath said, *I will never leave thee nor forsake thee*; Heb. 13. 5.

3. Labour to moderate your Affections to the things of this World: remember holy Agur's Prayer, *Prov. 30. 8. Give me neither Poverty nor Riches, but feed me with Food convenient for me.* Our Saviour tells Martha, Luke 10. 42. that *one thing was necessary*; not that we should be rich, or learned, or healthful, or have a great Name in the World; but that we should savingly close with Christ by Faith, be new Creatures, and live to him, to the Honour and Glory of God. And if these things be found in us, God hath given us the best Portion, whether we have less or more of the World; nay, tho all we enjoy of it was taken from us.

4. Con-

4. Consider, our Souls are Spirits, and made for higher things than to grovel in the Earth: they are our best part, and our greatest Care should be to secure them; the things of greatest consequence ought to be sought before things of mere temporal concernment: That he is truly wise that takes due care to save his Soul, but that he is a Fool that to gain the whole World loses his Soul. Such Principles as these kept in our Minds, may be a great means to preserve us from an eager and greedy Pursuit of the things of the World.

5. Consider our time here is but short, 1 Cor. 7. 29. We had not need therefore act the part of Children, and follow Bubbles; let us mind our great Business, for which we came into the World, and let us look to the main, whatever else be neglected.

6. We should take heed of Earthly-mindedness, lest that happen to us, which sometimes happens to those that dig in the Mines of the Earth; while they are eagerly digging and delving there, the Earth falls on them on a sudden, and miserably buries them. Let those that follow the World so hard with the wretched Neglect of their Souls, and are loading themselves with thick Clay, take heed they be not at last crush'd under it, and perish by it.

7. We should set before us the Examples of the most eminent Saints and Servants of God in all Ages; *They counted themselves but Pilgrims and Strangers here*, Heb. 11. 13, 38. yet they were such, of whom the World was not worthy. *Scultetus* observes, that none of the Saints mention'd in Scripture were spotted with this Sin. *Abraham* sojourn'd in the Land of Promise as in a strange Country, because he look'd for a City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. And the truth is, they that have God for their Father, Christ for their Redeemer, the Holy Ghost for their Guide and Comforter, the holy Angels for their Guard and Protectors, the Covenant and Promises of God for their present Support and Encouragement, and Heaven for their Inheritance hereafter; should have their Hearts in a great measure withdrawn from worldly things, and should mind and think very much of their Country that is above.

8. Those to whom God hath given much in this World should consider these as their particular Duties: (1.) To labour

labour to get the spiritual Riches of Grace, which will stand them in the greatest stead for ever. (2.) Not to over-value these worldly things, nor esteem them too highly, nor set their Hearts upon them; *Psal.* 62. 10. Nor, (3.) to put their Trust or Confidence in them; *1 Tim.* 6. 17. (4.) They should not glory in, nor boast of them; *Jer.* 9. 23. (5.) They should not be tempted thereby to scorn or despise the Poor; *Jam.* 2. 6. Nor, (6.) Use their Wealth and Power to oppress the Poor. (7.) They should honour the Lord with their Substance, *Prov.* 3. 9. 1. By promoting Piety and the Service of God. 2. By Works of Charity and Beneficence to the Poor; and so make to themselves Friends of their Riches, *Luke* 16. 9. Now Riches are made our Friends, when they are so used as they may be Evidences and give Testimony of our Piety, Charity, Justice, and Mercifulness. A poor Man's Hand (as one expresses it) whom we have relieved, is a Bill will be accepted in Heaven: *Prov.* 19. 17. *He that giveth to the Poor, lendeth to the Lord; and that which he hath given, he will pay him again.* (8.) They should often and seriously meditate on the Account they must give, how they have used their Substance and Estates; and consider they are not absolute Lords of their Estates, but God's Stewards, to whom they must give an account. (9.) They should be willing to let go whatever God shall call them to part with, and that without regret and murmuring.

Now for a Close of what hath been said under this Head, we must take this Caution; That seeing Covetousness does especially consist in the inward Desires of the Heart, which are best known to the Person himself (and which no Man knows, save the Spirit of a Man which is in him, *1 Cor.* 2. 11.) we should therefore be very wary and tender of charging Covetousness upon others. We may more safely and securely judge our selves in this matter than we can others; for we can better know the Nature and Qualification of our own Desires, than we can possibly of another Man's. Let us therefore take heed of evil Surmises and uncharitable Suspicions of any; as, upon such grounds as these:

Obj. 1. When a Person refuses to be bound for another, tho under great Straits.

Ans.

to be more especially watch'd against. 517

Answ. It is not judg'd a Person's Duty to be bound for another, any farther than he finds himself able and willing to pay, if the Person himself cannot: and see what is said in the Scripture of Suretiship, *Prov.* 17. 18. & 22. 28. *Chap.* 11. 15. & 6. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Many Persons and Families have been ruin'd by it; and therefore this may be rather the Effect of Prudence, than a covetous Disposition. See *Cradock's Knowledge and Practice*, p. 212.

Obj. 2. When the Person seems to live sparingly, and much under his Estate,

Answ. His Estate may be taken to be greater than it is, his Losses and many Charges may not be known to all; or it may be, he spares that he may not expose himself to such Temptations as some have been; or perhaps the Person spares, and in many things may deny himself, that he may the better provide for his Family, and have to supply the more fully the Necessities of those that want what he enjoys: or it may be, the Person's Care and Caution may proceed from a Sense of the contrary Evil of Prodigality, and of a vain and wasteful Temper, which cannot advantage any; but accounts Frugality in some, nay many cases, to be his Duty: this being recommended to us (as it seems to be) in that Direction our blessed Saviour gave to those that had been so plentifully provided for, *John* 6. 12.

Obj. 3. He lays up much.

Answ. We know not what part it is of what he hath, that he lays up yearly, nor to what ends. The Apostle prescribes it as a Duty belonging to Parents, to lay up for their Children, *2 Cor.* 12. 14. & *1 Tim.* 5. 8. he says that if any provide not for those of his own House, he is worse than an Infidel.

Let us all therefore carefully observe the Frame of our own Hearts, seeing the Sin of Covetousness is so secret and close a Sin, and consists chiefly in the inward Desires of the Heart; let us be severe and rigid in judging our selves, but be charitable and candid towards others.

C H A P.

C H A P. XVI.

Of the Things for which we are to be upon our Watch.

WATCH for and take all fit Opportunities to glorify God, and to do Good: this is to be like our blessed Lord and Saviour, who went about doing good, and made every place (where he came) the better for him. How much good may a seasonable Word drop for God do? A Sin wisely reprov'd and discountenanc'd, a good Hint well improv'd, some good Counsel seasonably given; of how much advantage to the Souls of others may these things prove? This is to be on God's side, and true to his Party. It should be our real Design at all Times, and in all Companies, either to do or receive good; and this will turn to a good and comfortable account. And to quicken us to this great and necessary Duty of continual Watchfulness,

1. Consider how naturally we are all prone to be secure and careless, and the Want of Watchfulness betrays to most of the Sins we fall into.

2. Consider the Vigilancy of the Tempter: And shall he be so watchful to destroy us, and shall not we be watchful to keep our selves from his Malice, when we have been so much warn'd of the one, and injoin'd the other? 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. *Be sober, be vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.* Eph. 6. 11. *Put on the whole Armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the Wiles of the Devil.*

3. Consider the Necessity of Perseverance, if we intend to be sav'd; and that a Concurrence of our Care and Watchfulness, in order thereto, is very requisite, and our indispensable Duty. The same God that hath determin'd the End, hath also appointed this as the Means; and it is not to be neglected without the greatest hazard and danger. Mat. 10. 22. our Saviour says, *Who so endureth to the end, he (and he only) shall be saved.* Let

as run with Patience (says the Apostle) the Race that is set before us, Heb. 12. 1. And be faithful to the Death, and I will give thee a Crown of Life, Rev. 2. 10. In the spiritual Race, not only he that cometh first, but that also holdeth out to the last, is sure to obtain the Prize. It's to no purpose therefore to do well for a spurt, and then give over, and break off again that good Course we are enter'd into; for it is Perseverance in well-doing that carries away the Crown. 'Tis true, God's call'd and sanctify'd People are preserv'd and kept in their State of Grace and Holiness by the power of God, by their intimate and close Union unto Jesus Christ, by virtue of his Merits, and constant Intercession for them, and also by a continu'd Influence from the Spirit, maintaining the Essence, Life, and Seed of Grace in them; so that they shall neither totally nor finally fall away, being kept by the mighty Power of God, 1 Pet. 1. 5. Yet observe these four things:

(1.) Seeming Grace may be lost, *Mat. 25. 28.* compar'd with *Luke 8. 18.* blazing Comets and Meteors are soon spent and fall, while true Stars keep their Station.

(2.) The common Work of the Spirit may fail; such as is spoken of, *Heb. 6. 4, 5.* viz. Illumination, some outward Reformation, temporary Faith, a slight Taste of the Comforts of the Gospel, a weak Glance upon the Glory of Heaven; stirring up, it may be, such a Wish as was in *Balaam*, O that I might die the Death of the Righteous! without living to God, and real Holiness. There may be also a partaking of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, that is, of Abilities for holy Duties: all these Blossoms may come to nothing, if without a thorow Change of the Heart, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, and Regeneration by him; therefore take heed of Secularity.

(3.) True Grace may suffer a shreud Decay; the Leaves may fail, tho there may remain Life in the Root. We read in Scripture of a Decay both of Faith, Love and Obedience. Some left their first Faith, 1 *Tim. 5. 12.* others left their first Love, *Rev. 2. 4.* And as for Obedience, we read of the first ways of *David*, as distinguish'd from his latter, 2 *Chron. 17. 3.* because *David* in his latter time fell into scandalous Sins. What has been the Case and Condition of others, may be our own;

therefore there is great need of Watchfulness, *Rom. 11. 20.* In Temptations, God's Children may be sorely shaken, the Operations of Grace obstructed for a time, the Lord hide his Face, and our Souls be troubled, tho yet a Seed remain, as in the case of *David*; all which should excite our diligent Care and Watchfulness.

(4.) True Grace, if we were left to our selves, would soon be lost. *Adam* shew'd a sad Example of this in Innocency; but we may comfort our selves in this, that our Security lies in God's Power and Promises, and that everlasting Covenant, which is well-order'd in all things, and sure; in our Union with Christ (as was said before) and not in our selves, or our own Strength. Christ hath a Charge, and undertaken it, to keep God's Children safe, and to conduct them safely to everlasting Glory: *John 10. 28, 29. I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, &c. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and no Man is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand; I and my Father are one.* God the Father, and Christ, are engag'd in the keeping of them: but it must be remember'd, that those whom God causes to persevere, he makes to persevere in the use of Means; as in their Case, *Acts 27. 31.* All shall come to Land; but *except these abide in the Ship, ye cannot be safe*: Tho God's Promise was past for their Security in the Storm, yet it must be in the use of Means. No Believer is so sure of his Continuance in a State of Grace, as that he needs not to be very wary, and watchful, and jealous over himself: *Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.* There is a necessary Fear of Caution, that is our Duty, as well as a Fear of Diffidence and Distrust, that is our Sin. Our Saviour pray'd, that *Peter's Faith* should not fail; yet, together with the other Apostles, he bids him *watch*, *Luke 22. 40, 46.* The Fear of God is a preserving Grace: *Jer. 32. 40. I will put my Fear into their Hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* This Fear will make us watchful, not diffident of God's Power and Goodness; and in this sense, *Blessed is the Man that feareth always*, *Prov. 28. 14.* and (as our Saviour advises, *Luke 22. 46.*) that *watcheth and prayeth, that he enter not into Temptation.* To Perseverance there is a Concurrence of our Care and Diligence requir'd; *Jude v. 21. Keep yourselves in the Love of God.* And, *Phil. 2. 12, 13. Work out*

out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, &c. Indeed the main Work is God's, for which we shall praise him to all Eternity; he is the *Beginner*, and he is the *Perfector*, Phil. 1. 6. He is both the *Author*, and the *Finisher* of our Faith, Heb. 12. 2. But may we then be idle, and careless, and negligent? No, certainly; for God worketh in us, and by us. If therefore there be no Grace working in us, nor working by us, and exciting and quickening us to work, and enabling us to sincere Obedience, and a careful and watchful Carriage towards God, we may justly suspect our State at present to be very bad. The Life of a Christian is never exempted from Care and Diligence to the very last: Satan is always busy, we have so many Corruptions within, and Snares without, in the World; and many times where there seems to be least Danger, there is most Cause of Fear. Lot, that was chaste in Sodom, miscarry'd in the Mountains, where there was none but his own Family: David's Example may warn the holiest Persons to the World's End, to be jealous over themselves. Who would have thought that he (whose Heart smote him for cutting off the Lap of Saul's Garment) should afterward fall into Uncleanness and Murder? Peter also is a sad Instance of Confidence in our own Strength.

Let us be watchful therefore, and pray; pray and watch continually; be diligent in the use of all appointed means, looking unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and resting upon his Grace and Strength, which alone can be sufficient for us; leaning upon that Rock that is higher than our selves, Psal. 61. 2. that so having begun in the Spirit, we may not end in the Flesh; that having begun to make a Profession of Religion, we may not fall off, and bring an ill Report upon the ways of Holiness, to the Dishonour of God, and great Hazard of others, as well as of our own Souls. A House begun, and not finish'd, is an Habitation for Skreech-Owls. Hold out to the last, that so you may obtain that honourable Title that *Moses* had, to be an *old Disciple*, Acts 21. 16.

I shall close this Head of Watchfulness, and this whole Chapter of walking with God, which should be the great Work of our Lives, with these two following Directions,

rections; which (thro the Blessing of God) may be very useful to us therein.

Direct. 1. Inure your self (besides your daily solemn Prayer) to send up frequent mental ejaculatory Prayers to God. These holy Liftings up of the Heart to the Lord, as they are very pleasing to him, so they are exceedingly advantageous for the fetching speedy Aid and Assistance from Heaven, for the quenching of a Lust, resisting of a Temptation, the better performing any Service or Duty, the delivering us out of any present Straits, inabling us to bear any Affliction; or in case of any Failing, to beg Mercy and Pardon speedily, while the Heart is smitten and affected with a Sense of its Miscarriage: As *David*, when his Heart smote him for numbering the People, *2 Sam. 24. 10.* we find him lifting up his Heart unto the Lord, in this manner; *I have sinned, I beseech thee take away the Iniquity of thy Servant.*

These ejaculatory Prayers are (as it were) Messengers sent Post to Heaven for some speedy Help, when time is not afforded for continu'd Prayer. And as they hinder no Business, but (being duly perform'd) further it much every way; so no Business can hinder them. When a Minister is preaching or praying, and finds his Spirit indispos'd, dry, and barren; how might he speed one of these swift and silent Messengers to Heaven for Help and Assistance? When a Christian is hearing the Word, of how much advantage is it to send up such silent and fervent Prayers, that God would set home such or such a Doctrine upon his Heart, or help him to forsake such a Sin then reprov'd, or to enable him to believe and embrace such a Truth? As the Disciples, when Christ was preaching to them that hard Lesson of brotherly Forgiveness, *Luke 17. 5.* they put up that holy Ejaculation, *Lord, increase our Faith.* When we are walking, riding, or employ'd in our lawful Calling and Business, either alone, or in company, we may thus converse with Heaven, without hindering what we are about. And to persuade and encourage us to the Practice of this Direction, consider,

(1.) These ejaculatory Prayers do very much honour God, in that they acknowledg him to be a God that can understand the Language of our Hearts, and the least Movings of our Desires towards him, and that he is a God hearing Prayers, and a present Help in Trouble.

(2.) They

(2.) They are a good Means to keep our Hearts spiritual and heavenly, and in a good Frame. Strangeness often grows between God and our Souls, for want of this spiritual Intercourse; and many affecting Providences lose their kindly Work upon us, for want of a present lifting up of our Hearts in some suitable Ejaculations.

(3.) They are a special Means to fit us for more solemn Prayer. But here,

1. Take heed of Formality, Slightness, and Customariness in them; let them be serious, and fervent, and from the Heart to the Lord, looking for an Answer of them.

2. Use these holy Ejaculations, not only in a way of Petition, but also of Thanksgiving for Mercies receiv'd. Thus our Saviour did, *Father, I thank thee, &c.* Mat. II. 25. And thus *David* often in his Psalms, being full of such holy Breathings and affectionate Thanksgivings.

3. Take heed, because of these, of neglecting solemn and stated Prayer.

Direct. 2. Get a deep Sense of your own Weakness, Inability, Insufficiency, and of your continual need of Divine Assistance; that will dispose the Heart to a readiness in every thing, by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, to make your Requests known unto God.

To conclude this Head of Watchfulness: Let it be your serious and fix'd purpose every Morning (thro the Assistance of Grace) not willingly or knowingly to commit any Sin, or do any thing that may be displeasing to God; but if (contrary to your serious Intention) thro Infirmary, sudden Surprizal, Violence of Temptation, Incogitancy, you do at any time fall; humble your Soul before the Lord, bewail and confess your Fault with Sorrow and Grief, and speedily recover your self, by a serious Repentance and flying to the Blood of Christ for Pardon. Rest not till you have thus made your Peace again with God, and rise from your Fall with a greater Detestation of Sin, a stronger Resolution against it, Love to Christ, and Thankfulness for pardoning Mercy, and begging Help to be more watchful for the future.

C H A P. XVII.

Of Diligence in our particular Callings.

HAVE a special regard to the Duties of that particular Calling, wherein by the Providence of God you are plac'd: Be diligent and faithful therein, in a conscientious Discharge whereof, the very Life and Power of Religion in a great measure consists.

I. Let nothing persuade or draw you to a Life of Idleness or Sloth. Remember *Adam* in Innocency had a Calling appointed him by God; and after the Fall, *Gen. 3. 19.* 'tis God's Decree upon Man, *In the Sweat of thy Face thou shalt eat thy Bread, till thou return unto the Ground.* No Person in the World hath a Privilege to live idly and lazily, but either by Labour of Body or Mind, either by the Sweat of his Brows or of his Brains, either in Church or Commonwealth, or else in his own Family, and faithful Inspection into, and careful Management of that Estate, which the Lord by his Providence hath intrusted him with; he ought to be serviceable and profitable to human Society. An unactive idle Life exposes to many Sins, and many Punishments. When the Devil finds Men idle, and not employ'd in God's Service, he entertains them into his; if we have nothing to do, he will be ready to employ us. *David*, when idle, fell into the heinous Sin of Adultery. A lawful Calling is an excellent Preservation against a multitude of Sins and Temptations; *1 Cor. 7. 20, 24.* *Let every Man abide in the same Calling wherein he was called.* When God calleth us to be Christians, he calls us out of the World as to our Affections, but not out of the World as to our Employment. An idle Professor is a scandalous Professor, and walks inordinately; and faithful Diligence and Conscientiousness in the management of our particular Calling, with an Eye to the Glory of God, and our Duty to him, he is pleas'd to account as done to himself, and as part of his Service; *Col. 3. 22, 23, 24.* Therefore,

Of Diligence in our particular Callings. 519

II. Be diligent in all the Business of your lawful Calling for Conscience-sake. Many take Pains enough, but not out of Conscience to God's Command, nor with an eye to his Glory: *Whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord*, saith the Apostle, *Col. 3. 23*. We must be diligent in our Calling, on a religious Account, performing the Duties thereof in Obedience to God, studying both for matter and manner to approve our selves to him. Think thus with your self; This is the Employment and Calling wherein the Providence of God hath set me: I am but his Servant, whether in the Shop or at my Plow, or in the management of any of my temporal Affairs; to him I must give an Account of my Diligence and Faithfulness.

III. Seek and pray earnestly to the Lord for his Blessing on your lawful Labours and Endeavours. It's an irreligious Course to engage in any Business without Prayer, and we must be fervent therein, as well as not slothful in Business: it is sanctify'd by the Word and Prayer, *1 Tim. 4. 5*. Hereby we take a right Course to prosper, when by Prayer we humbly beg the Blessing of God upon our Endeavours. *It's his Blessing that maketh rich*, and that gives us Power to get Wealth, *Prov. 10. 22. Deut. 8. 18*. If his Blessing be wanting (which we are not likely to have except we crave it) all our Labours are to little purpose; *Psal. 127. 1, 2*. Except the Lord give his Blessing, 'tis in vain to rise early, to sit up late, and to eat the Bread of Carefulness, &c.

IV. In the Management of your Calling, and temporal Concerns, labour to exercise these Graces:

1. Faith and Affiance in the Goodness of God; casting your self on his gracious Promises and Providence in the use of lawful means, expecting Success from him alone, according to that of the Psalmist: *Psal. 37. 5. Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in him, and he will bring it to pass*.

2. Moderation of your Affections; be not over-eager nor inordinately bent on your worldly Affairs. Remember our Saviour's Precept, *Let not your Hearts be over-charg'd with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and the Cares of this Life*; *Luke 21. 34*. Pursue not your worldly Business with too much Anxiety and Fervour of Mind.

520 *Of Diligence in our particular Callings.*

3. Contentation ; to be contented with that Portion (little or much) which God upon our honest and faithful Endeavours is pleas'd to allot us, quietly acquiesce in his wise Disposal.

4. Patience ; be not dismay'd, neither fret or repine at those Crosses and Disappointments which you must meet with in the way and course of your Calling, considering God often exerciseth his own dearest Children with many such Trials and Afflictions.

V. Let not your particular Calling too much incroach upon your general ; the World is of an incroaching Nature, it's hard to converse with it, and not come into Bondage to it. Worldly Employments will be apt to juggle out spiritual Duties, if we have not a great care, tho we may spend the greatest part of every of the six Days in our worldly Businesses and Employments ; *Exod. 20. 9. Six Days shalt thou labour, &c.* yet we ought to spend some part of every day in our spiritual Duties, whereby our worldly Business will be the better season'd and sanctify'd : Therefore be careful,

1. That your worldly Business eat not up and devour that time, which should be set apart daily for them, and for Communion with God therein.

2. That your worldly Employments do not blunt the Edge of your Affections to spiritual things. We may use the World, but must take heed of loving the World ; *1 John 2. 15, 16. Love not the World, nor the things that are in the World ; if any one love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him, &c.*

VI. Labour carefully to avoid the Temptations that your particular Calling and Employment is liable to. Every Calling and Condition of Life hath its peculiar Temptations, and a great deal of Care and Christian Prudence is requir'd to foresee them and avoid them, that so we be not insnar'd by them.

VII. In the Management of your worldly Affairs, endeavour to carry a heavenly Mind. Be often lifting up your Heart in spiritual and heavenly Meditations. Think how little it will profit you, if you gain the whole World, and lose your own Soul. Think *how Godliness is profitable for all things, having a Promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come ; 1 Tim. 4. 8.* Let us remember we are but Pilgrims and Strangers here

Of keeping Company as in the sight of God. 521

on Earth; Heaven is the proper Country of holy Souls.

VIII. When Success crowns your faithful Endeavours in your Calling, let God have all the Glory: Sacrifice not to your own Net, your own Industry, Wit, Parts, Prudence, or any other second Cause; but ascribe the Glory wholly to him, in whose hand alone it is to give success.

C H A P. XVIII.

Of keeping Company as in the sight of God.

ANother Duty to be carefully practis'd by us, is, to have a great care what *Company* we keep. We must labour to keep such Company as may further and help us forward in the way to Heaven, and not hinder and discourage us therein. If therefore your Calling and Necessity of Business draw you sometimes to converse with wicked and ungodly Men, yet be not willingly, ordinarily, and unnecessarily a Companion of such Persons, who by their vain unfavoury Discourse and Conversation will be apt to draw your Heart to a Neglect and Slighting of spiritual things; *Prov. 12. 11.* 'Tis exceeding dangerous to be ordinarily in such Company as will be ever hindering, never helping us forward in our Christian Course; and where we shall hear nothing of Religion, but in a way of *Ridicule, Distaste, and Contempt*: Thousands have been everlastingly undone by evil Company.

That therefore we may be the more wary in this particular, let us consider of these things.

I. *Ill Company* must needs be exceeding dangerous, because Sin is of an infecting contagious nature; it quickly spreads among such, as ordinarily and familiarly converse together. Why should we not be as much afraid of being infected with Sin, as with a contagious Disease? *Prov. 23. 20.* but that we are carnal, and fear the Evil of the Body, which is attended only with temporal Death, more than the Evil of the Soul, which is Sin, and ends in eternal Damnation. *Purge out the old Leaven,* says the Apostle, (the incestuous Person) *because a little Leaven leaveneth the whole Lump;* 1 Cor. 5. 7. There is a strange Power in ill Company, to infect and deprave the best Dispositions;

522 *Of keeping Company as in the sight of God,*

positions; 1 Cor. 15. 33. Can a Man touch *Pitch*, and not be *defil'd*? Consider farther, that,

1. By frequent and familiar Converse with *such*, there steals upon a Man secretly and insensibly, a Dislike of Religion, and the Ways of Godliness, as too strict and restraining to human Nature.

2. He usually comes by degrees to approve and delight in sensual Courses, and sinful Practices.

3. At last he comes to be an utter Enemy to, and Opposer of the Ways of *Holiness*; for such as Men usually converse with, *such* (for the most part) they prove to be: ungodly Company is the deep Ditch, out of which few escape; *Eccles.* 8. 12, 13.

II. To *delight* in ungodly Company is a sure sign a Man's Heart is naught. *Likeness* is the cause of *Love*: *Like will to like*, whether good or evil. When you chuse wicked loose Company, when you may have better, and find Delight and Content in *such*, you plainly declare what you are. Tho many will not be drunk, or swear, &c. yet if they delight in the Company of those that do so, 'tis plain their Hearts and Dispositions are against Godliness. *David* says, *I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and of them that keep thy Precepts*; *Psal.* 119. 63. and that, *in the Saints of the Earth, and the Excellent was all his Delight*. What Fellowship has the *Wolf* with the *Lamb*? or the *Sinner* with the *Godly*? There's no reason he should be accounted God's Friend; whose familiar Converse is with his profess'd Enemies.

III. By frequenting evil Company, you harden, encourage, and embolden them in their sinful Courses. How can they think but that you approve their Ways, seeing you delight in their Society? Whereas the Apostle commands us to *have no fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darkness, but rather to reprove them*; *Eph.* 5. 11. *David's Eyes ran down with Rivers of Tears, because he saw Men kept not God's Law*; *Psal.* 119. 136. And *Lot's* righteous Soul was *vex'd with the filthy Conversation of the Wicked*, among whom he lived. So far is it from the Temper of a gracious Heart, to hold a delightful Familiarity with wicked Companions!

IV. Consider, ill Company is a great hindrance to Conversion: one wicked Person, by his Scoffs and Flouts, has done more hurt than many *Sermons* have done good.

Scoffers

Of keeping Company as in the sight of God. 523

Scoffers at Religion, and Deriders of true Piety and Holiness, make things of the saddest and most serious Concernment to seem ridiculous. And when once the Awe of those great Truths is weaken'd, Men are easily induc'd to cast off all Care and Profession of Religion. Many have been jeer'd from the practice of Godliness and a holy Life, that could never by serious Arguments be dissuaded from it. Mockers at Religion are usually the worst of Sinners: *Psal.* 1. 1. the *Chair* of the Scornful is by the *Septuagint* render'd the *Chair of Pestilence*; they being indeed the Pests of Mankind, *Isa.* 28. 22. *Prov.* 19. 29. But let wicked Men take their course, 'tis better to go with their Frowns and Scoffs to Heaven, than with their Love to Hell; *1 Per.* 4. 4. *Mal.* 3. 18.

V. Remember 'tis not only the openly Profane and Dissolute, the Swearer and Drunkard, and the profess'd and open Enemies to Godliness, that are to be avoided as hurtful Companions; but take heed also of too frequent Society with dead-hearted *Formalists*, and Persons merely civil: *2 Tim.* 3. 5. Such Persons are usually remiss, and slight, and indifferent in Religion, and their Conference barren and unsavoury, nothing conducing to the raising the Heart heaven-ward; and tho they run not into such exorbitant Courses as the openly Profane do, yet usually they love not Strictness, nor the Power of Godliness, thinking *That* more ado than needs. And by frequent familiar Converse with such, we shall be in danger to content our selves with a little Goodness; seeming something in our own eyes, and thinking our selves in some respects better than they. Whereas among wise, holy, spiritual, experienc'd Christians, we shall still find matter of Imitation, and Provocation to be reaching after greater degrees of Grace and Holiness: *Heb.* 6. 12. *He that walks with the Wise, shall be wiser; but a Companion of Fools shall be destroy'd: Prov.* 13. 20.

VI. Consider, our Company will be part of our Happiness in Heaven; Communion of Saints here, is the lower Heaven of Saints. O what Comfort, what Benefit may we reap from good Society! How many thousands have cause for ever to bless God that ever they lived near, or came acquainted with some Persons that were serious Christians. From such Company a Person comes away reviv'd, quicken'd, encourag'd to walk in the

524 *Of keeping Company as in the sight of God.*

the ways of *Holiness*; he finds a good relish upon his Spirit, and his Heart drawn heaven-ward; he finds himself provok'd to press forward towards the Mark of his *high Calling*: but from wicked Company 'tis ten to one but he brings away a guilty Conscience, a sad Heart, or both. Upon all these Considerations, labour to make your Acquaintance and familiar Converse with those here, who must be your Companions in Heaven, if ever you come thither. These Considerations and Cautions, as to the Choice of your Company, being premis'd, remember that,

1st, In all Company, of whatsoever sort, you shall be at any time in, you must amongst them walk with God, and as in his sight; your Conversation in *Word and Deed* must be such as may procure,

(1.) Glory to God. (2.) Credit to Religion. (3.) All mutual lawful Content, Help, and real Benefit to each other.

Your Converse must be,

1. *Holy*: you must as much as lies in your power prevent all evil Speech and Behaviour, which might else break forth; and endeavour carefully to break it off, if it be already begun in your Company. Suffer not the Name of God, or Religion, nor yet your Brother's Name to be traduc'd; but in due place and manner contend against either. Be diligent to watch, and take all good occasions to promote good Discourse, which may tend to the Practice and Increase of Piety and Honesty.

2. Your Conversation must be *humble*: give all due Respect to all Men, according to their several Places and Gifts; reverence those that are above you, and submit to all that are in Authority over you: esteem Equals better than your self, in Honour preferring them before you; condescending also to such as are inferiour to you, *Rom. 12. 10, 16.*

3. Be wise and discreet in your Carriage to all you converse with: be not too open, nor over-suspicious, nor yet too credulous; for the Simple believeth every word, but the Prudent looks well to his goings; *Prov. 14. 15.* Apply your selves to the several Conditions and Dispositions of Men in all indifferent things, so far as you may without Sin against God, or Offence to your Brother; becoming all things to all Men, *1 Cor. 9. 19, 20, 23.* Comporting your

Of keeping Company as in the sight of God. 525

your selves with them so, as (if it be possible) you may live in peace with them, and may gain some Interest in them to do them good; *Rom. 12. 18.* Yet be watchful herein, that under pretence of this you be not for all Companies with a like Satisfaction and Delight, as was before hinted, nor do any thing to sooth them in their Sins, or to comply with them in any; for this is carnal Policy and base Hypocrisy, not true Wisdom.

2dly, Know when to speak and when to be silent: how excellent is a word spoken in due season! *Eccles. 3. 7.* Endeavour so to speak, or to be silent, as either your Speech or Silence may make for the Glory of God, and the Cause of Religion, and the Good one of another.

3dly, Be not hasty to speak, nor much in speaking, but when just cause shall require it; for as it is a shame and folly to answer a matter before it is heard, so for any to speak before their time and turn. This is commended in the Example of *Elihu*, *Job 32. 4, 5, 6.* In the multitude of Words there wants not Sin, but he that refraineth his Lips is wise; *Prov. 10. 19.*

4thly, Be sparing to speak of your selves, or Actions, to your own Praise [except in case of necessary Apology and Defence of God's Cause, maintain'd by you, or in the clearing of your wrong'd Innocence, or needful Manifestation of God's Power and Grace in you] and then it must be with all Modesty and Humility, giving the Praise to the Lord. Neither must we cunningly hunt for Praise, by debasing or excusing our selves or Actions, to draw forth the Commendation of others: thus seeking of Praise argues Pride and Folly. But labour always to be found in your Duty, doing that which is becoming and worthy of Praise, seeking that God may be glorify'd by you; and then you shall have praise of him, whatsoever you may have of Men, *Rom. 2. 29.* Observe *Solomon's Rule*, Let another praise thee, and not thy own Lips; *Prov. 27. 2.*

5thly, As you must be wise in your Carriage towards others, so labour also to be so for your selves: make the best use you can of all Occurrences in your Company with others. Let the Good you see, be matter of Thankfulness, and improv'd by your Imitation; and whatever Evil you see, be matter of Grief and Humiliation, and a Warning to you to watch against the like, being made
of

326 Of keeping Company as in the sight of God.

of the same Mould with others. If any report Good of you to your faces, repress it as soon and wisely as you can, giving the Praise of all things to God: fear it as a Temptation and Snare, and the Effect of it, lest it be an occasion of feeding *Pride*, *Self-Love*, and *Vain-glory* in you. If their good Report be true, bless God that he hath enabled you to give any cause for it; and if false, endeavour to make it good by your After-Carriage answerable thereto. When an evil Report is rais'd, be not so inquisitive to know who rais'd it, as to make a good use of it to your own Heart; for it rises not without God's Providence: which if true, may be to bring you to a sight of your Error and Fault; and if false, yet consider whether you have not run into the Appearance or Occasions of those Evils: and this should humble you, and cause greater Circumspection for the future. See also God's wise and good Providence in discovering the Folly and Malice of foolish and evil Men, who raise and take up such a Report of you without cause, and in thus preventing your falling into the Sin you are warn'd of. A reviling Enemy may be a good *Remembrancer*, for we may hear from him things that may be useful to us; of which, Flatterers will not, and Friends being too much blinded with Affection, may not admonish us.

6thly, Intermeddle not in other Mens Business, but upon due Calling.

4. Let your Conversation among all be *loving*: be kind and courteous towards all Men, and endeavour to do good to them, as you have Ability and Opportunity; and be careful not to do any wrong or injury to any, but ready to forgive and put up what you receive from others, rather than to revenge your selves, or in any undue and unchristian way to seek to be righted. As you shall have opportunity, do good especially to the Souls of those you converse with; exhort and encourage unto well-doing. If they shew not themselves to be obstinate Scorners of Good, and Contemners of good Counsel, you must, so far as God gives you an Interest in them, admonish and inform them with the Spirit of *Meekness* and *Wisdom*. With this Cloke of *Love* you shall cover and cure a multitude of Infirmities and Offences; in which by an imprudent, severe, and rigorous Carriage towards them, you may exasperate and harden them

them the more. In all your Carriage towards others, seek not so much to please your selves as those you converse with, so far as it may be for their Good, and to their Edification : your Speech being that which is good, and such as may minister Grace, not Vice and Corruption, to the Hearers. A Person may often be discern'd of what Country he 'is (whether of Heaven or Earth) by his Language ; his Speech will betray him. Now that you may in all your Converse in the World thus carry your self worthy the Gospel of Christ, be serious in seeking for it earnestly at the Throne of Grace.

(1.) Be sure the Law of God and the Power of Grace be in your Hearts, else the Law of Grace and Kindness cannot be in your Speech. You must be endu'd with a Spirit of Holiness, Humility, Love, Gentleness, Long-suffering, Meekness, and Wisdom ; else you can never converse with all as you ought to do : for out of an evil Heart come evil Thoughts, and out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh ; but a good Man out of the good Treasure of the Heart brings forth good things. Weigh and ponder all your Words, before you speak them.

(2.) Lift up your Hearts in Prayer to God before you come into Company, that you may be able to order your Conversation aright ; and also in ejaculatory Requests to him, as Occasion offers, whilst you are in it.

C H A P. XIX.

In Ill Company.

WHEN by reason of common Occasions, in respect of the Affairs of your Calling, general or particular, you cannot wholly shun ill Company ; yet therein look,

1. That your Conversation be honest, unblamable, and harmless, even with a Dove-like Innocence ; that by your good Example they may (without the Word) be brought to love the Power and Sincerity of Religion. Howsoever, give no advantage to the *Adversary* to speak evil

528 *Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof.*

evil either of you, or of your Religion upon your account; but by a holy Life and Conversation stop the mouths of ignorant and foolish Men: or if they will notwithstanding speak against you, this may shame those that blame your good Conversation in Christ's field. But walk wisely as Serpents, and warily, lest they should bring you into trouble, or in any respect be injurious to you; but especially, lest they infect you with their Sin. And that you may not be infected by it,

(1.) Be not high-minded, but fear, lest you be led into Sin by them. Be not self-confident; he that sees his Neighbour slip and fall before him, had need to take heed lest he fall.

(2.) Your Soul (like righteous Lot) should mourn and be vex'd with seeing and hearing their unlawful Deeds.

(3.) Raise your Heart to a sensible Loathing of their Sin, yet have Compassion on the Sinner; and so far as you can hope for benefit by that means, admonish him as a Brother. Which leads to the following Head of Christian and Brotherly Reproof; having premis'd this Advice, That when you see or hear any Wickedness, lift up your Heart to God, and before him confess and disclaim it, and any liking or allowance of it; praying him to keep you from it, to forgive the Person, and to give him Grace to repent of it.

CHAPTER XX

Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof.

THAT Excellent and Christian Duty of reproof and admonishing an offending Brother, is in these days too much neglected, and grown out of use, tho' it be the most real Benefit and Kindness that can be done by one Man to another. Men are forward enough to deride the sinful Misdemeanors of others behind their backs, but few make conscience of reproofing them so proudly to their faces. When People fall out and are angry, then out comes ordinarily all they know, (and perhaps more too) in a rude and passionate manner, to all

grace

grace each other: but how seldom do they admonish one another in Love, in order to their Amendment, and the Salvation of their Souls? What shall be offer'd here, is a fraternal or charitable Admonition: to which Duty,

I. We have Commands both in the Old and New Testament: *Levit. 19. 17. Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer Sin upon him. Mat. 18. 15. Eph. 5. 11. And have no Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darkness, but rather reprove them.*

II. Hereby we may much advance God's Glory, discountenance Sin, and promote Piety in the World: many Sins may be suppress'd, if Stangers-by would but bear witness against them, and give check to them, by a wise and mild Reproof. If we can but persuade Men to break off their Sins, and embrace the ways of Holiness, we should thereby bring much Honour and Glory to God; and what should we poor Creatures more heartily design and endeavour, than to advance the Glory of our gracious Creator and Redeemer?

III. 'Tis the most blessed and charitable Work we can be employ'd in, viz. the rescuing of precious Souls out of the hands of Satan, and saving them from everlasting Perdition: *He which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a multitude of Sins; Jam. 6. 20. If thou meet thy Enemy's Ox or Ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back, &c. Exod. 23. 4, 5.* And should we take pity and care of our Neighbour's Ox or Ass, yea, tho it be of our very Enemy's, and not of his Soul? If we hear Men swear, toss God's Name vainly and lightly in their mouths, jest with his Word, talk filthily, deride Holiness, slander good Men, plead for Profaneness, or see them walk in unconscionable and sinful Courses; ought we not to admonish such Men, if we have fit and convenient opportunity to do it; and to intreat them to be-think themselves, whither such Courses tend? If I see a Man tottering on the brink of a deep and dismal Pit, where he must needs perish if he fall in, have not I a hard Heart if I will not catch hold of him, and endeavour to stay him? Alas! why do we not consider then what it is to fall into the Pit of Hell, and to lie there in everlasting Burnings?

530 *Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof*

IV. We shall hereby keep our selves from *partaking in other Mens Sins*; by neglect of this Duty, we may become accessary to Mens going on in sinful Courses and dishonouring God, and so draw upon our selves the Guilt of their Sin and Ruin; whereas if we faithfully admonish Offenders, we shall hereby deliver our own Souls, and if they perish, they perish to themselves. *St. Paul* could not have said, *I am pure from the Blood of all Men*, if he had not been a faithful Reprover, as well as a diligent Instructor: *Acts 20. 26.*

V. If this Duty was conscientiously practis'd, it would rob Satan of one of his greatest Advantages to destroy Souls; which is, the Fashionableness and Creditableness of Sin: it would discredit Sin, and bring Christianity into reputation; it would drive away that frivolous, impertinent, empty Conversation, that wanton noisom Discourse that passes for the only Entertainment of this corrupt World. It would drive away Back-biting, Judging, Censuring, rejoicing in the Folly and Shame of others, which are the Bane and Shame of Converse and Society.

VI. The Advantage is great that will accrue to us, if we discharge this Duty faithfully; *Dan. 12. 3.* A great Delight will arise in their Souls from the Testimony of their Consciences, that have endeavour'd thus to discharge their Duty, and a *Blessing from the Lord will come upon them for it*, *Prov. 24. 25.* What *Objections* may be made by any against this necessary and so important Duty, you may find fully answer'd in *Mr. Cradock's Knowledge and Practice*, Chap. 16. p. 184.

I come, in the next place, to give some Directions for the right Performance of this Duty.

1. Labour to walk circumspectly your self; look well to your own Life and Conversation, that it may be, as much as in you lies, blameless and harmless, that so you may be more capable of performing this Duty (with advantage) towards others. When you are casting the Beam out of others Eyes, leave not a Mote in your own evidence your Uprightness by *keeping your self from your own Iniquity*, while you are endeavouring to remove it from another; and be careful to set a good *Example* your self, that your Zeal may not be contradicted by your Practice,

2. Look

Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof. 531

2. Look well to your own Heart, that your *Ends* and *Intentions* be upright and sincere herein; that you be not mov'd to this Duty out of any proud Humour of contradicting or controlling others, or on purpose to disgrace them; or out of Vain-glory, and a secret ambitious Desire of getting your self a Name; or for any such by and base End: but let your Motive be an earnest Desire to discharge your Duty to God, to abase Sin, and advance Holiness in the World, and the Salvation of your Brother's Soul.

3. Look well to it, that the thing you offer to reprove be a Fault in it self, and a Fault that he is guilty of that is reprov'd.

4. Before you set upon this Work, send up fervent Prayers (either solemn Supplications, if you have time, or secret mental Ejaculations) to the Lord, for the Pardon of your own Sins; and to direct, assist, and bless your Endeavours to his Glory, by the Amendment and Salvation of the Party, for whose benefit that Admonition is design'd.

5. Let your Reproofs be usher'd in with Prefaces of Good-will, and manag'd with Evidences of Love, Pity, and real Affection, to the Party reprov'd. When you reprehend the Faults of any, it is not annis (many times) to commend what is good in them; that they may see you as forward to take notice of what is good and commendable in them, as to reprehend what is evil, which will make them take Reproof the better.

6. Be *serious* in reprehending others. A loose and trifling Reprehension between Jest and Earnest usually doth more harm than good, and rather confirms the Sinner in his Sin. He may well think it matters not much whether he leave his Sin or no, when he sees another make a jest of it; *Prov. 14. 9.* Let your Heart therefore be deeply affected with the Dishonour done to God by it, the Danger the Party's Soul is in, if he go on in his Sin; and then shew him plainly and seriously the Evil of it.

7. Back and confirm your Reproof with plain places of Scripture, that the Party may see and feel that it is God reproves him rather than you; that you do but put him in mind of what God has declar'd concerning Men in such a case; that it is not as we will, who shall be

532 Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof.

fav'd, and who shall not, but as God will; and God has reveal'd that such as live thus and thus, shall never enter into his Kingdom. Intreat him therefore to consider where such Courses will end, and what must needs become of his Soul, without timely Repentance and forsaking those evil ways.

8. Be discreet in giving Reproofs: call in Prudence to assist the Charity you intend. Distinguish prudently between Person and Person; for tho' all are to be reprov'd (except they be Dogs or Swine, or obdurate Hereticks, Tit. 3. 10.) yet all are not to be dealt with in the same manner. This Caution the Apostle Jude gives, Ver. 22. *Of some have compassion, making a difference; and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.* Some are of a more flexible nature, and therefore fair and loving Admonitions are likeliest to work upon them: some are harden'd obdurate Sinners, these should be rebuked sharply (when gentler means will not do) and must be terrify'd with God's Judgments, that they may fear him who is able to cast both Soul and Body into Hell; Tit. 1. 13. Mat. 10. 28.

9. Be impartial in reprehending those whom it is your Duty to reprehend. Do not do, as Saut did in executing the Command he had against Amalek, who spar'd the Far and Chief, and destroy'd only the Refuse; put on a truly Noble and Christian Resolution, and fear not the Face of Man in performing your Duty to God. God is dishonour'd by one Man's Sin, as well as by another's; and Sin is destructive to the Soul of one Man, as well as another; therefore one should be admonish'd, as well as another. Great Men should be admonish'd, because their Temptations are great, and because they may do great good or hurt by their Example; and the meanest should also be admonish'd, because their Souls are as precious as the other: and poor Creatures! they are (many of them) very insensible of their Sin and Danger.

10. Do not strive to make any Man more guilty than he is: if he denies the Charge, and pleads his Innocency, fairly and friendly lay open the grounds on which you speak, but stand not much upon doubtful Proofs, nor wrest any thing to the worst Sense, but accept of the most favourable Constructions of Words and actions; remembering that *Charity thinketh no evil, but believeth* all

Of Christian and Brotherly Reproof. 533

all things, hope in all things, &c. 1 Cor. 13. 7. Yet labour, from false Rumours and uncertain Scandals, to raise Arguments for greater Circumspection for the time to come: seeing Men are so apt to wait for our Haltings, we ought to be very careful how we walk.

11. By all means forbear bitter and reproachful Language: many Reproofs are quite lost, because there is more of Passion in them than Compassion. Tho' there must be (many times) some Warmth in a Reproof, yet it must not be scalding hot. Such is the Nature of most Men, that they are apt to be won with Love and Mildness; but angry and vilifying Terms make them more stubborn and obstinate. Therefore the Apostle says, *The Servants of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all Men, patient, in Meekness instructing them that oppose themselves* 1 Pet. 3. 15. Abundance of Meekness and Gentleness, and especially Patience, is needful for those that have to do with Sinners, in this kind: 'tis usual for them to grow testy and angry, and fall foul upon the Reprover; and if you should be angry too, then all Hope of doing good is lost. Come therefore resolv'd before-hand to *bear all things, endure all things*: if the Party reprov'd storm at you, let Tears of Compassion rather drop from your Eyes, than Words of Anger and Reproach come out of your Mouth.

12. When you have discharg'd your Duty, go to God, and pray earnestly to him for Success: ply the Throne of Grace by secret and fervent Prayer, that God would prosper your Endeavours for the Glory of his Name, and the Recovery, Amendment, and Salvation of the Person reprov'd. To begin and end this Duty with Prayer, is the way to engage God in it.

C H A P. XXI.

In Good Company.

THIS is highly to be esteem'd of, and much desired, *Mal. 3. 18.* that our most frequent Converse may be with such as are serious Christians, and our De-

light in them who are most likely to quicken and help us forward in our heavenly Course, and no ways hinder us in it. *Heb. 6. 12.* We are commanded to love the Brotherhood: how much soever the World scoff at it, see that your most free and delightful converse be with them, and that you may be able to say (with David) *Psal. 119. 63. I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and them that keep thy Precepts; and to the Saints that are in the Earth, and to the Excellent in whom is all my Delight: Psal. 16. 3.*

2. Express all brotherly Love to them, improving your time together for your mutual Good, chiefly for the Increase of each other's Faith and Holiness, provoking one another to Love and to good Works. Your Love is then a brotherly Love, when you love them out of a pure Heart fervently, because they are Brethren, Partakers of the same Faith, and Spirit of Adoption; having the same Father, and being of the same Household of Faith with you: when you love them not only as Men (for so you do or should love all, even your Enemies) nor yet with a common Love of Christianity, wherewith you love all Professors of the same Religion with you, tho' actually they shew little Fruit and Power thereof; but with a Specialty of Love, for kind spiritual, and for agree more abundant, called therefore *Brotherly Kindness*, *2 Pet. 1. 7.* Where this Love is, it will knit Hearts together, like *Jonathans* to *David*, making you to be of one Heart and one Soul; it will make you enjoy each other's Society with spiritual Delight; it will make you to bear with one another, and to bear one another's Burdens, and to communicate in all good things communicable, with Gladness and Singleness of Heart, as you are able, beyond what you shew to others that are not alike excellent; nay, it should be so intire and ardent, that you would not account your Life too dear to lay down for the common Good of the Brethren.

When therefore you meet with those that fear God, make Improvement of the Communion of Saints, not only by communicating in natural and temporal good things, as you are able, and as there is need; but especially in communicating of things spiritual, edifying yourselves in your most holy Faith, by holy Speech and Conference, and (in due time and place) in other spiritual

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Exercise: Lose not your short and precious Time with idle Compliments, worldly Discourse, or Talk of other Mens Matters and Faults; nor yet, *Athenian*-like, in a barren and fruitless hearing and telling of News, out of affection of Strangeness and Novelty only; but let that be such as relates to God's Government and Kingdom in the World. This may be exceeding useful to you, to direct in Prayer, Praise, &c. as the Case and Condition of the Church, and the Affairs of the World with respect thereto, may call for. But let the Matter of your Discourse be for the most part, either of God, or of his Word, and Ways wherein you should walk; or of his Works of Creation, Preservation, Redemption, Sanctification, and Salvation; of his Judgments which he executeth in the World, or of his Mercies shew'd to his People; or else Matter of Christian Advice, either concerning the things of this Life, or of that which is to come. Impart also to each other the Experiences and Proof you have had of the Workings of God's Spirit, his Grace and Power in this your Christian Warfare; the Methods of his Dealings with your selves or others; how you got rid of such a Corruption, vanquish'd such a Temptation, attain'd to a Facility in such a Duty. Impart to each other whatever may tend to the Advancement of Holiness; and, as there shall be occasion, exhort, admonish, and comfort one another.

Make choice not only of such Matter of Speech as is good and lawful, but such as is fit and suitable, considering the Condition and Need of those before whom you speak. And avoid all Confrontation, and judging of the spiritual State of others.

There will be need of the Exercise of much fervent Love and Charity, even among the best; Satan being ready to hinder as much as may be all that is good among God's People, and to cast in Matters of Difference and Discord; and while Infirmities and Reliques of Corruption are in all, they will be subject and apt to mistake, and misconstrue one another's Actions and Speeches, and also the Ends and Intent of them; so that there will be continual need that this Bond of Love be strong, and not broke asunder by any of these, or by any other means; but that all the Children of God, those that truly fear him, should remain fast and sweetly knit

together in the Unity of the Spirit, through the Bond of Peace.

This Brotherly Love, and Christian Society with each other, is the more to be desir'd and promoted, as being one of the most sensible Evidences of your Conversion, and Translation from Death unto Life. When you have been in Company, it may be well to examine how far you have been useful in it, by hindring any Evil in others, and have preserv'd your self from Evil; how far you have endeavour'd to do good to others, and have succeeded therein, and how far you have been advantag'd by it; and accordingly be thankful, or humbled for it.

CHAP. XXII.

Of stated Christian Conference.

AS it is the Duty of all sincere Christians to farther one another heaven-ward, by all good and proper Means that are in their power, so stated Religious Conference about spiritual things, rightly manag'd, may be exceeding useful; tending to the increase of Knowledge, and to the quickening and strengthening of all our spiritual Graces. Communion of Saints, is an Article of our Faith: the Apostle tells us, *We being many, are one Body in Christ, and every one Members one of another.* Such a Body true Believers are by their Union with Christ, and ought to improve their Communion and Fellowship one with another, for their mutual Edification. There ought to be a mutual Serviceableness among Christians, and particularly by this means, endeavouring to build up one another in our most holy Faith.

This we have many Exhortations to, in the Scriptures: as Heb. 3. 13. *Exhort one another daily, lest any be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin.* 1 Thess. 5. 11. *Wherefore comfort your selves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.* Heb. 10. 24. *And let us consider one another, to provoke unto Love, and to good Works.* Ver. 25. *Not forsaking the assembling our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the Day approaching.*

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We find it practis'd by the primitive Saints, *Acts 2. 42.* and recorded with Honour and Commendation of those who so waited upon God in it, and faithfully perform'd it. *Mal. 3. 16.* *It's said they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and a Book of Remembrance was written before him, for them that fear'd the Lord, and that thought upon his Name.* To this end God has given several Gifts and Graces to his People; *1 Pet. 4. 10.* *As every Man hath receiv'd the Gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God: 1 Cor. 12. 7.* And where Christians are most frequent and faithful in this Duty, there usually they are in the most thriving Condition, both as to Knowledge and Holiness: as Countries that maintain a Trade and Commerce together, do enrich each other.

'Tis a means also to prevent Errors, Christians being better able to resist them by their united Forces and mutual Counsels, than singly by themselves. The Church is said to be terrible as an Army with Banners, *Cant. 6. 10.* but Stragglers, and such as go alone, are often ensnar'd and taken. How easy is it to pervert such, who neglect the Benefit of other Christians Advice and Counsel?

This will be a good means to increase Love also in the Hearts of Christians one towards another; and Love is the Livery of Christ: *By this shall all Men know that ye are my Disciples, if ye have Love one to another; John 13. 35.*

And lastly, nothing tends more to farther and increase the Power of Godliness in Places and Persons; nothing brings more feeling Joy, Comfort and Delight, (next to Communion with God in Christ) than the actual Communion of Saints, and the Love of Brethren; those that are the Children of God, and of the same Household of Faith. It is the beginning of that Happiness on Earth, which shall be perfected in Heaven; for Kind the same, and only differs in Degree.

Now for Direction herein, and for the right Management of this Duty;

1. Christians should endeavour to be furnish'd with all spiritual Knowledge and Understanding; having Senses exercis'd to discern, or distinguish, Between Good and Evil, both in Points of Judgment and Practice; and that they may have Utterance and Ability from the Holy Spirit,

Spirit, to speak in their Measure and Station as the Oracles of God.

2. Let them labour for those *Graces* that are requisite for this Duty; such as Sobriety of Judgment, Self-denial, acknowledging and prizing the Gifts and Graces they see in each other, and condescending to those that are of low Parts, going a slow pace, rather than seeking vain-gloriously to excel and out-go them. Those other Graces also of Love and Affability (hereby encouraging weak Beginners) Inoffensiveness, Sincerity, and Plain-heartedness, are to be diligently sought and press'd after.

3. Let Christians, in their Religious Conferences, have this principally in their *Aim*, to advance the Glory of God, to edify one another, and to do good to one another's Souls; so furthering each other heaven-ward.

4. Be *humble* and *lowly-minded*, not presenting above your Gifts and Calling. When you speak of the things of God, be reverent and very serious; speak positively and confidently only of those things, which you clearly understand, and where you have Experience or sure Proof: think not your self too good to learn of any; neither harden your Neck against the Admonition or Reproof you meet with; but that you may be as *David*, when admonish'd by *Abigail*; he saw God in it, and blessed him for it.

5. Decline controverted Points (such things usually begetting Strife and Variance) and apply your selves to speak of things that are *practical*: as of God and his Goodness; of *Christ*, his Person, Offices, and Merits; of the *Covenant of Grace*; of the Doctrine of Justification by *Christ*; of the Patience and Self-denial of the Saints and People of God, gone before us; of God's Dealings with his Saints and Servants in former Times, and how he has graciously help'd them in their Distresses; of Heaven, and the Glory of it. How did the Martyrs in Prison (by such ravishing Discourses) free one another from the Fears of Death? How did holy *Bradford's* sweet and chearful Company and Converse with his Christian Friends in Prison, make the very *Dungeon* lightsom and Palace-like to his Fellow-Prisoners, as themselves confess'd?

6. In propounding *Questions*, or in your answering of them, see that the Matter be apt and pertinent, both in respect

Of stated Christian Conference. 539

respect to the Persons to whom they are propounded, and in respect to those also before whom they must be answer'd.

7. Some Rules for the better ordering and regulating such Christian Meetings and Exercises, being drawn up by an * Holy and Excellent * Mr. Row recorded in his Person, I shall mention here; viz. *Life.*

(1.) That they be not in the time of publick Ordinances.

(2.) Nor to the hindrance of Family-Duties.

(3.) Nor in Places nor with Persons of an evil Report.

(4.) Nor to the hindrance of Mens particular Callings.

(5.) Nor by Night, or other suspected times.

(6.) Nor for Controversies of Disputation. But that they be,

1st, For the clearing and setting home of Truths receiv'd in the publick Ministry, and in clearing of Cases of Conscience arising thereupon, or other ways: and in such Exhortations, Admonitions, Counsels, and Comfortations, as conduce to the foremention'd Purposes, or that are otherwise seasonable,

2^{ly}, In some convenient time of the Day, for an Hour or two at the most, and once in the Week at most, except in some urgent Cases.

3^{ly}, In some Family of good Report, and with Persons of good Report.

4^{ly}, That every one present have liberty to speak, one by one.

5^{ly}, That they begin and end with Prayer for a Blessing.

6^{ly}, That the Minister of the place, or some other godly Minister, may be desir'd to be present.

7^{ly}, All being ended, that presently every one departs to his Place and Duty, and walk suitably, that the Ways of God be not evil spoken of.

8. If any Jars happen herein at any time, let them be prudently and seasonably heal'd and made up. Prayer one for another in this case, is of singular use. Let them (as the *Apostle* speaks in another case, *1 Jam. 5. 16.*) confess their Faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they may be heal'd; if any one's Mind hath been disemper'd and ill-affected towards another.

9. As it is very fit and requisite to begin, so also conclude all with solemn and fervent Prayer for a Blessing on these Exercises.

Exercises, that those Truths may be set home upon the Hearts of all that are present; also for particular Mercies, suited to each other's Necessities; and in general, for the Church of God.

C H A P. XXIII.

Of Retired Holy Meditation.

WHEN you are alone, then is a fit Season for you to be employ'd in holy *Meditation*. This is another Duty needful to be practis'd by us, as we have an opportunity for it, in order to our Proficiency in true Piety.

Holy Meditation is the acting of the Mind upon some Divine Subject, in order to the working upon the Affections, and raising some fit Resolutions in the Soul therefrom, tending to God's Glory and the Furtherance of Holiness. But how many Christians are there, that live in the constant Neglect of this so exceeding useful Duty, by which all other Duties are improv'd, and by which the Soul digesteth Truths, and draweth forth their Strength for its Nourishment and Refreshing? Meditation rightly manag'd, doth exceedingly tend to the Advancement of Piety.

1. Consider, this was the Practice of many of the eminent Saints and Servants of God recorded in the Scriptures; as *Isaac, David, &c.* they were much in this Duty: and the Apostle *Paul* recommends it to *Timothy*, 1 Tim. 4. 15.

2. Consider the great Benefit of it duly perform'd: it is an excellent means,

(1.) To increase *Knowledge*, and to make the Mind serious and solid. None are more knowing, settled, establish'd Christians, than such as are much in Meditation.

(2.) To stir up and awaken the *Graces* of God's Spirit in us; hereby we awaken our Faith, inflame our Love, strengthen our Hope, enliven our Desires, increase our Joy in God; we loosen our Affections from the World, and fore-acquaint our selves with the Glory that is to come.

(3.) To

(3.) To make the Word profitable: Meditation is the Digestion of the Soul. It's not the taking in of Food, but the Stomach's concocting it, that makes it turn to Blood and Spirits: for want of this, how many Sermons are lost, and do no good? The Word, which is the Food of the Soul, passeth through the Understanding, and either is quite lost, or is like raw and indigested Meat, which doth not yield that Nourishment which otherwise it might do. The Word will not profit us, except we take time to think and meditate upon it.

(4.) To prepare the Heart for Prayer and other holy Duties: Meditation tunes, and prepares, and fits the Heart for solemn Worship.

(5.) To fortify and animate the Soul against Sin and Temptation: If we did but often consider of the Evil and Danger of Sin, it would be a great means to deter us from the Practice of it.

(6.) It is an excellent Help and Means of getting and keeping up a more uninterrupted Communion with God. It is the Soul's Perspective, whereby it sees something of the Glory and Happiness of that Kingdom that is above.

For Direction how it should be manag'd,

I. Pitch upon some convenient time of the Day for this Duty. A Christian's timing his Duty aright, is a great Help to him in the right Performance of it: some have chosen the Morning, and some the Evening. Of our Saviour, we read *Mark 1. 35. that in the Morning, rising up a great while before Day, he went out into a solitary place, and there prayed.* And in *Gen. 24. 63. that Isaac went out to meditate in the Fields at Even-tide.*

II. Pitch upon some convenient retir'd Place. The Wise-man tells us, *Prov. 18. 1. Thro Desire a Man having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all Wisdom.* There is nothing the Devil is more an enemy to, than that a Man should often retire and separate himself from the World, to meditate on his everlasting Concernments: the Devil cannot indure we should consider whether we are in our way towards Heaven or Hell.

III. Get a good stock of profitable Materials to meditate on: as the Attributes of God; the infinite Perfections of God, and his Love; the Infiniteness of Christ's Merits and Sufferings; the Perfection of the Scriptures, and the sacred Promises of God therein; of Remission of

542 *Of Retired Holy Meditation.*

of Sin; of Sanctification, and all Covenant-Blessings, being purchas'd by the Blood of Christ; of the Evil and Danger of Sin; of the Vanity and Emptiness of the Creature, and the Fulness that is laid up in Christ for Believers; the State of our own Soul to God-ward; the Excellency of a gracious State; the Preciousness of Time; and of the four last things, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell; the Blessedness of the State of the Saints above: These, and such Subjects, will be fit Matter to employ our Thoughts about in our Retirements, as has been mention'd under a former Head.

IV. Labour to get your Heart into a right Frame and Temper: the Work is serious, and calls for all the Powers of the Soul, that our Thoughts may be intent and fixed, when we are ingaging in this Duty.

V. Beg the Assistance and Help of the Spirit of God, to order your Meditations aright; send up, at least, some ejaculatory Requests to God, for that end: Prayer sanctifies every Duty.

VI. Ordinarily confine your Thoughts to one Subject only at a time: one Truth driven home by Meditation, will kindly affect the Heart.

VII. For the *Method*;

1. Let your Mind *consider* and *dwell* on the thing you meditate on, so long, till you have settled some Persuasions in your self concerning it.

2. Labour to stir up and awaken such Affections in your Heart, as the Subject meditated on requires.

3. Draw some fit and proper *Resolutions*, tending to God's Glory, and the furthering your self in a gracious Course, from your Meditations.

VIII. Do it sincerely: 1. Take heed of Formality and Superficialness.

2. Close all with Prayer, looking up to God for a Blessing.

3. Reduce your Meditations into Practice.

CHAP.

C H A P. XXIV.

Of Repasts and Recreations.

AS the squandering away our precious Time in Idleness and Sloth would be our Sin, so likewise would the immoderate Pursuit of Pleasures and Recreations. Our whole Course and Employment in the World should be such, as has some way a Tendency to the Honour and Glory of God, and our being useful and serviceable to one another, and the promoting of our spiritual Interest and our eternal Welfare: yet such being the Frame and Constitution of the Soul and Body of Man here, in this state of Imperfection; that they are not able to stand bent with Earnestness constantly upon any thing, nor to be employ'd always *intently* without some *Refreshment* and *Relaxation*; this therefore sometimes may give them a just title to some innocent and harmless Recreation, when we have tired our Minds or Bodies before, in some honest Employment. But then we must be careful that our Recreations have these Qualifications:

1. They must be *lawful*; not dishonourable to God, nor injurious to our Neighbour.
2. *Expedient*; not such as usually minister occasion to any Sin or Scandal.
3. *Seasonable*; at fit and convenient times, not on the Lord's-Day.
4. *Moderate*; not spending too much time upon them. What a sad account will they give to God, who spend whole Days and Nights at Cards and Dice, or other Sports; who possibly never bestow a quarter of so much time in secret upon their Souls?
5. The *End* of Recreation must be only to give us a moderate Refreshment, and to fit us for Business, the Duties of our general and particular Calling; and not to be it self a tiring Business to us. Therefore here two things are to be noted (as one well advises:)

(1.) We are not to use Sports only to pass away, or drive away our *Time*, (as the World's wicked Phrase is)

which

which we should study to redeem and well improve. Surely we have little reason to study ways of driving away That, which flies away so fast of it self, and which it is so impossible to recal.

(2.) Covetousness must have nothing to do in them. The *End* of our *Recreation* should be merely to recreate our Spirits, and not to win Money: they that do so, run themselves into two great dangers; the one, of coveting and greedily desiring their Brother's Money; and how such (upon sober Consideration) can reconcile this Practice to the tenth Commandment, cannot be easily apprehended: the other, of Rage and Anger, if they happen to lose; both which are apt to draw on other Sins. Covetousness will also tempt to Cheating and Cozening; Anger to Peevishness and Passion, if not to those grosser Sins of Cursing and Swearing, which common Experience too evidently shews. And how careful should every sincere Christian be, to avoid the Occasions and Temptations leading to Sin? Those that mind the eternal Welfare and Salvation of their Souls, will consider these things, and let them have their due weight upon their Minds; while those that do not, perhaps will slight them.

And here may be added a Caution against all such Recreations as have *Cruelty* in them. How unbecoming is it for a Christian, to take pleasure in that which is so immediately the Fruit and Effect of Sin? This it was that set the Creatures at enmity one against another: and we cannot then but with reason reflect upon our own first Apostacy from God, and from our primitive Rectitude which we were created in; which we should do with Shame and Humiliation, when we see those direful and bitter Effects thereof, occasion'd by our *own* Sin, in the Brute Creatures, appearing in their Enmity one against another. And how can we reasonably make that the Matter of our Delight and Pleasure, which is and should be the Matter of Mourning and of our Humiliation. To this Head also may be refer'd any Acts of Cruelty towards Brute Creatures: this is forbidden *Deut. 22. 6, 7. & Prov. 12. 10.* a *righteous* Man is to *regard the Life of his Beast*. We should not therefore take any delight in the Death of any of our Fellow-Creatures, or in destroying of them; tho we are thankfully to use them, according to the Lord's Appointment, and for

those Ends for which he is pleas'd to allow them, for the Sustenance and Support of our own Lives, by means of the Death of our Fellow-Creatures; but to take pleasure and delight in their Death, is not becoming a Christian. And it may not be improper therefore here to mention that Rule which some have given (with respect to the Creatures which the Lord has put into our hands, and given us the dominion over) that we should not take away the Life of any, which are not either (in some respect or other) hurtful to us whilst living, or useful to us by their Death. All Cruelty and Delight therein is prohibited, tho' this Prohibition is not altogether in regard to them, but that thereby the Lord would teach us to be tender of, and to shew mercy to one another. It being unlawful to use the dumb Creatures cruelly, it is much more unlawful to use one another so.

From hence we may infer the Duty of Moderation in the Use of the Creatures, which the Lord has given in mercy to us for our bodily Sustenance and Support.

That we should not abuse that Liberty by eating or drinking to excess, whereby Nature will be rather burden'd than refresh'd; but it must be with an eye to the *Glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. so as may be most subservient thereto. Herein we must therefore be holy, just, temperate.

It was their Sin who *fed themselves without all Fear of God*, Jude ver. 12. Meats and Drinks lose their chief End, and are not good to us, if we be not pure and holy in the Use of them, Titus 1. 15. and if they be not *breed'd with Prayer and Thanksgiving*.

We must not eat merely to please the Palate, and to indulge the sensual Appetite, but for Health and Strength; Rom. 13. 13. Prov. 23. 20.

It must not be the Bread of Deceit, or ill-gotten Food. We are not allow'd to eat the Bread of Wickedness, nor to drink the Wine of Violence; 2 Thess. 3. 12. Prov. 4. 17.

And to conclude this Particular; Let all those who are inclin'd to Pleasure, or to Excess in the Enjoyment of those good things of this Life (which the Lord has given us for better Ends and Purposes) beware of abusing any of those Mercies, so as to become thereby Fowls to our Lusts and Corruptions; but remember what were the Sins of Sodom, that we may carefully avoid them;

and those the Prophet tells us, Ezek. 16. 49. were *Pride, and Fulness of Bread, and Abundance of Idleness, neither did they strengthen the hands of the Poor and Needy.* How many are there to whom God hath given much of the World, and a Capacity thereby of employing themselves and it, so as might bring much honour to him, and that they might be very serviceable and useful in the World more than others; that mis-employ and abuse it, and together with it, that precious time which might be employ'd to so much better purposes? How many are there that verify that vulgar Definition, *what is a Gentleman but his Pleasure?* What a sad thing is it, that many such know not what to do with their Time; in which (being at liberty from servile Employments) they might be very useful and serviceable in the World? Their Hours lie dead upon their hands, and they have not discretion to improve so precious a Talent. Certainly they can never want Business, who are to work out their Salvation during their short Abode here in the World, and to secure the State of their Souls to all Eternity.

C H A P. XXV.

How to close the Day with God.

HAVING shew'd how to walk with God all the Day long, I come now to shew how to close the Day, and lie down with God in the Evening.

I. Let it be your constant practice every night, to retire your self, and then review and reflect upon all your Actions, and whole Behaviour in the Day-past. When God made the World, we read he every day look'd over his own Works: surely God had no need to examine his Works, that were so exact and perfect as they were; but it might be written for our Instruction, that we should do likewise. Therefore that we may keep our Consciences clear from Guilt, it may be requisite that we take our selves in private before we lie down to sleep, and consider our whole Carriage and Behaviour

haviour the Day past; what Sins we have committed, or what Duties we have omitted, or carelessly perform'd; what has been apparently amiss in us, either in our Hearts or Carriage, in our Thoughts or Affections, or in any of our Words or Actions that day: that so we may, by a serious Humiliation, retract and undo whatever hath been amiss, and may make all strait between God and our Souls. If we search and find out our Sins when they are but a day old, before they become customary, and have taken root, they will be the more easily remov'd, by serious and speedy Repentance, and fresh Application of our selves to Christ, thro his precious Blood, for Pardon; that so we may be cleans'd from them in that Fountain, which by his Grace is open'd for Sin and Uncleaness. It was the Saying of one, That he durst not for a World lie down at night upon his Bed to sleep, with any one Sin unrepented of and unpardon'd to him. It was accordingly the Practice of the eminent Lord Chief Justice *Hale* (as Bishop *Burnet* records of him, in his Life) that he took a strict account of his time; laying it down as a Rule for his constant Practice every Evening, to cast up the Accounts of the Day: where ought was amiss, to beg the pardon of it, and to gather from thence a Resolution of more Vigilance; and for what was well, to bless the Mercy and Grace of God, that had preserv'd, sustain'd, and assisted him. But for want of such frequent Self-examining and Soul-purifying, the Heart becomes more harden'd, Sin gets deeper root, the Devil gains ground and advantage, and the Soul is more and more alienated from God, whilst perhaps it may not be perceiv'd or observ'd by us.

Now in order to our Inquiry how we have perform'd the fore-mention'd Duties, with respect to the several parts of the Day, having set our Hearts as in the presence of God, let us put these following Questions to our selves, or some of the like nature:

1. How did I *awake in the Morning*? Had God the first of my Thoughts, or some of his glorious Excellencies, and not the World, nor any of my Lusts and carnal Affections?

2. Was I *serious*, and had I any sensible *Communion* with God this day, in my secret and family Duties? Drawing near to God with my Heart, as well as with

my Body, and putting forth the Strength of my Affection in all the Duties of his immediate Worship?

3. Hath it been my Care to keep my *Heart* in an holy Frame from Duty to Duty?

4. Have I this day been watchful over my *Thoughts*, not suffering any wanton, worldly, or vain Thoughts to lodg in my Heart, but cast them out with hatred of them, as soon as they have risen there?

5. Have I been watchful over my *Words*, not suffering any corrupt Communication to proceed out of my Mouth? but have I employ'd my Tongue in speaking (as I had opportunity) that which was good, to the Edification of others?

6. Have I watch'd over my *Affections*, restraining them from what was unprofitable and evil, and not inordinately minding earthly things? Have I been temperate and self-denying in the Use of Creature and Earthly Comforts and Enjoyments, setting my Affections on things above chiefly?

7. Have I this day been watchful over all my *Ways* and *Actions*, making God's Word my *Rule*, and his Glory the chief *Aim* and *End* of them all? Have I set God always before me, walking as in his sight and presence; looking up to him, in all I do, for his Direction, Assistance, and for a Blessing from him thereupon?

8. Have I kept my self this day from [*my own*] Iniquity, and not ventur'd upon, or allow'd my self in any known Sin? or if overtaken by any, have I thereupon humbled my self before God, and return'd unto him, by true and unfeigned Repentance?

9. Have I not lost any opportunity of *doing* or *receiving* Good? Have I not neglected *Christ* in any of his Members?

10. Have I follow'd my worldly Affairs with spiritual Affections, eying God and lifting up my Heart to him, in some heavenly Ejaculations? And have I been just and faithful in all my Dealings with Men?

11. Hath my Carriage in *secret* been such, as that I could approve my self to God, who was a strict Observer of it?

12. How have I behav'd my self in *Company*? Have I not done or said any thing therein to the dishonour of God, or the discredit of his holy Religion; but have I labour'd

labour'd in all my Conversation this day, to be fruitful and profitable therein, both to my self and others, and to glorify God thereby?

13. Have I been faithful in the Discharge of my Duty in all those *Relations* which I stand in? and not neglected, nor done any thing contrary thereunto?

14. Have I submitted obediently to the Will of God, in all his providential Dispensations?

II. Call to mind all the Passages of God's Providence towards you, and labour to make a right use of them; it is our Duty, and will be our Wisdom to observe and treasure them up, and thus to call them to our remembrance, that they may make the deeper Impression upon us: particularly,

Consider what hath pass'd between God and your Soul this day; what hath pass'd from God to you, what Intimations of his Love, and Discoveries of himself he has made to your Soul, what Tastes you have had of his Sweetness and Grace, and what holy Impressions it has made upon you.

On the other hand, consider what your Carriage has been towards him, what entertainment you have given him, how you have valu'd and esteem'd his Presence, and delighted in the Intimations of his Love; what Awe hath been upon you of his Holiness, and his all-seeing Eye; what Longings and Desires, and Breathings of Soul you have felt after him; as *Asaph*, *Psal.* 73. 25, 26. and how you have lived *in* him and *to* him.

Thus ponder and consider in the Close of the Day, and accordingly demean your self before the Lord: be humbled in the sight of your Sins, and set all right by Faith and Prayer. Adore God in his Acts of Grace and Condescension towards you, and loath your selves for any Acts of Sin and Unkindness, Undutifulness, or Disrespect, that you have been guilty of towards him. This would be a blessed Course to prevent Distances and Estrangements between God and us: *David* calls it a *communing with his own Heart*, and enjoins it as a Duty of the highest importance; *Psal.* 4. 4. & see *Psal.* 77. 6.

III. If upon any Surprize or Occasion we have been moved to *Anger*, let us take care *the Sun go not down upon our Wrath*, *Eph.* 4. 26. Whereby the *Apostle* implieth such a speedy Suppression of it, that it may not remain,

550 *Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.*

remain, nor rest in us, and much less sleep with us ; for thereby we should *give place to the Devil*, who would aggravate the same by all the amplifying Circumstances thereof, that if he could, he might thereby heighten it up to Revenge, or any other Wickedness. And if by continuing so short a time in such a Sin, we run so great a hazard, consider then how dangerous it is for us to lie down in the Allowance of any Sin, lest we sleep not only the Sleep of natural Death, but of that which is eternal ; for who knoweth what a *Night* will bring forth ? Let us therefore labour to walk continually with God in Uprightness, and to set all things right in our Souls, before we lie down upon our Beds ; and so even our Death it self will be no matter of Terrour to us, but an Entrance into that everlasting Rest which remains for the People of God.

Lastly, (if you can possibly) fall asleep out of some heavenly Meditation ; whereby your Sleep may be sweeter to you, and your Heart in a better Frame when you awake, whether in the Night or in the Morning.

C H A P. XXVI.

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

REmember to sanctify and keep holy the *Lord's Day*, which is the *Christian Sabbath*, according to the Commandment, *Exod. 20.*

1. We find a Sabbath instituted by the Lord himself from the beginning, *Gen. 2. 2, 3.* Before we read of the Fall of *Adam*, we read of a Seventh Day blessed and sanctify'd by God himself ; *God blessed the Seventh Day, i. e.* dispens'd a peculiar Favour to it, exalted *that Day* above the rest, and sanctify'd it : that is, he separated and consecrated it to his own holy Worship, and annex'd a Blessing to the Observation of it. Tho *Adam* possibly needed not a Day of Rest in Innocency, because of bodily Weariness, yet God saw it convenient to injoin him to set apart one Day in seven, to enjoy therein more especial Communion with his Creator.

And

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day. 551

And if a Sabbath was requisite for *Adam* in his sinless state, that he might (by being taken off from the Works of his Calling) converse with God more immediately in holy Duties and Exercises; how much more need have we of *one*, in this corrupt Estate, who are so prone to Sin, and have need of all the Helps that we can have against it? The whole Nature of Mankind was then in our first Parents, when this was enjoin'd them; and tho' they might have lived without Sin here on Earth, yet they were not then to live without a Sabbath.

2. We find a Sabbath observ'd by the Patriarchs, before the giving the Law, with an express Charge touching the Observation of it, *Exod.* 16. 22, 27. and ratify'd by the miraculous Fall of Manna on the six Days only, and none on the seventh; and being gather'd on the sixth Day, remain'd sweet to the seventh, but not so on the other Days. It was therefore observ'd in obedience to God's Command by them, for we must not impute Will-Worship to those holy Men.

3. We find the Day again (for the better Observation of it) proclaim'd on Mount *Sinai*, and that with a more solemn Preface and Reasons to confirm it, than any other of the Commandments. We have in the fourth Commandment a Rule for the solemn time of God's Worship, a Day in every Week to be spent in a holy Rest, after six Days working; which may therefore justly challenge this Title, *The Sabbath of the Lord thy God*, that is, a Day of God's own appointing. As the very Light of Nature teaches us there is a God, and that God is to be worship'd, and that therefore a time must of necessity be set apart for that Worship, consecrated to him, and to be a time of holy Rest (because we cannot serve God in Holiness, and be about common Employments both at once;) so it will easily be granted, that it's fit God should appoint his own time for his own Service: which he having done in this Commandment, we are under an indispensable Obligation to observe it.

4. God ushers in his Precept for it, above all the rest, with a *Remember*: intimating of how great importance the Observation of it is; this Command tending so much to procure the Observation of all the rest of his Commands, they being therein made known, and the Observation of them frequently inculcated upon the People

552 Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

ple on this Day. And what is enjoin'd in this Command being either naturally or positively moral, has its Obligation from the positive Sanction and Command of the Lawgiver. The things enjoin'd by God in this Command, are such as these:

1. To contemplate with Joy and Gratitude God's glorious Work of Creation, that Wisdom, Goodness, and Power of his display'd therein, and the exceeding great Benefits dispens'd thereby to all his Creatures, and especially to Man.

2. Herein God's particular Favours and Mercies are especially to be reflected on and remember'd by us; as the *Israelites* were especially on this Day to remember their great Deliverance out of *Egypt*.

3. By this Command God seems to declare to us, that some competent time ought to be allotted to attend the great Concerns of our Souls, and that we should not spend all our time in carking and caring for the things of our Bodies.

4. It intimates that it's very fit some time be set apart for the publick Worship of our Creator solemnly, by those that own him for their God.

5. That some time of Rest and Refreshment should be allow'd to our *Servants*, whom God hath appointed to serve and minister to us, that so their Lives might not by incessant Labour be grievous to them, but that they might serve us comfortably; and especially, that they may have convenient leisure to serve God, and mind the Welfare of their Souls, which ought to be their chief Care.

6. That some Mercy should be also shew'd to the poor *Beasts* that labour for us, allowing them some Ease and Rest from their painful Drudgery in our Service. All which seem highly reasonable in their own nature, and we should be under an Obligation thereto from natural Light; being to be approv'd by Reason it self, as Duties of Piety, Justice, and Humanity, which would not be for the benefit of Mankind to be dispens'd with. And the Appointment of the Time, and the Proportion of it to be allotted for these solemn Duties, and that a Cessation of Labour therein both of Man and Beast should be so strictly enjoin'd (except in the cases of Necessity and Mercy) must be resolv'd into the holy Will and Pleasure of

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day. 553

of God the Lawgiver, who saw what was most needful and convenient for Man, and fit to be injoin'd him.

Now that the changing of the Sabbath from the last Day of the Week to the first, is still consonant to this Command of God, and in no respect contradictory to the Morality of it, is evident; if we consider,

I. The several Grounds of it following. As,

1. The *preceptive* Part of this Command, which doth not point out one peculiar Day more than another; it requires only the Day of Rest which God appoints should be sanctify'd, by virtue of which Precept the seventh Day from the Creation was to be sanctify'd, till by the Resurrection of Christ it was alter'd, and the first Day was instituted in the room of it: which we are therefore as much by the same Command bound to sanctify.

2. The *directive* Part [*Six Days shalt thou labour, but the Seventh Day is the Sabbath*] mentions no particular Day, nor limits to the Seventh from the Creation: But the Lord intending to chuse a new Day upon account of the glorious Work of our Redemption, he hath left it in large and general Terms, not restraining it to one Day more than another: and tho the Seventh from the Creation was then pointed at, as being the Seventh under the Divine Sanction; yet the Alteration of the Day from one Seventh to another, was no Impeachment of the Morality of the Commandment.

3. The *argumentative* Part, which enforceth the Sabbath's Observation, is God's Example, in these words; *For in six Days the Lord made Heaven and Earth, and rested the seventh Day.* Thus the first Day of the Week is as much the Sabbath of the fourth Commandment to Christians, as the last Day was to the Jews, being a Day in seven as well as that; the Reason holding only for the same proportion of time, viz. six Days for Labour, and a seventh for Rest; not this or that Day from any prefix'd Period.

4. The *benedictive* Part also confirmeth it; *Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath-Day.* It's not that particular Seventh, but the *Sabbath-Day* that the Lord blessed; and so the Blessing being entail'd (as it were) on the *Sabbath* as such, it passeth from the *Jewish* Sabbath to the Christian. It's not fix'd upon one Day determinately, as if not to be alter'd to any other in the Week, but comparatively

554 *Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.*

paratively only, in relation to six preceding working Days: so that the whole Substance of the Commandment may stand, tho the particular Day be chang'd; and the Commandment (as to all the Substantials of it) makes as much for the Lord's Day (being one in seven of God's appointing) as ever it did for the old Sabbath.

II. Let it next be consider'd, that the old Sabbath was actually alter'd and chang'd accordingly, from the *last* to the *first* Day of the Week, by the Authority of our Lord and Saviour; and that upon the account of our *Redemption*, manifestly accomplish'd by his most glorious Resurrection from the Dead, tho not in expresse Words, yet by necessary Consequence (comparing one Scripture with another) it is from thence strongly infer'd; as God's Acceptance of *Abel's* Sacrifice prov'd there was a Precept for Sacrifices before the Law, by some Word known to them, tho not reveal'd to us. And as it is manifest that Christ has chang'd the Law, *Heb. 7. 12.* and the Priesthood, and the Covenant, and the Seals of the Covenant, and the typical Place of Worship, *Mal. 1. 11.* *John 4. 21.* and the times of it, since their Primitive Institution, being to continue but for a time; so also he has fix'd anew the Day of the Christian Sabbath.

Christ ending his Work, and entering into his Rest, laid the Foundation of it upon the Day of his Rest; the Work of our Redemption being finish'd by Christ's Resurrection from the Dead, he rested thereupon from his Work, as God after the Creation of the World did from his: and as God the Father's Rest from all things that he had made for Man, was the Ground why he would have his People rest that seventh Day on which he rested, *Gen. 2. 4.* so the Son of God, our Saviour's rising and resting from his Passion, and State of Ignominy, and the Curse that he was then under (whereby he merited eternal Redemption, and hath restor'd the World of Believers to a new and better Creation) is a sufficient Ground why God will have his People now to rest upon the same seventh Day whereon he rose and rested; namely, the *first* Day of the Week, to keep it holy unto him. This Work of Redemption, wrought by Christ, being comparatively far more excellent than the Work of Creation it self (tho that was so excellent) did much more deserve a weekly Memorial; the Excellency where-

of

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day. 555

of appears in this, that it cost so much more to redeem the World of God's Elect, than to create the whole World : for in the Creation of it, the Lord only *spake the Word, and it was done*, Psal. 148. 5. but to redeem the World, cost no less than the precious Blood of the Son of God. So that this Work hath swallow'd up the former, as the *Temple* did the *Tabernacle* : and upon this account we who live after Christ's Resurrection, are as much bound to the Observation of the *first* Day of the Week, as they who liv'd before were of the *last*.

III. That it is of Divine Institution, even of Christ himself, appeareth by the Title given to this first Day of the Week, *viz.* [*The Lord's Day*] for whatsoever in Holy Writ is said to be the Lord's denominatively, of *that* Christ is the Author and Instituter : as for instance [*the Lord's Supper*] because he instituted it ; [*the People of the Lord*] because he chose them ; [*the Lord's Messengers*] because he sends them. So this in like manner, not by Creation, for so every Day is *his* from the beginning ; but by Divine Institution, being instituted by Christ (the Lord of all our time) for Divine Worship and Service, in order to our Sanctification, and for the Memorial of the great Work of our Redemption wrought by him. Agreeable hereto is that of St. *Augustine*, who saith, " That the *Apostles* appointed the Lord's Day to be kept " with all religious Solemnity, because on that Day our " Redeemer rose from the Dead, and therefore it is call'd " the *Lord's-Day*." *Aug. Sermon. 151. de tempore.*

IV. It is confirm'd by the Practice of the *Apostles*, who constantly assembled together on the *first* Day of the Week, which is our Lord's Day ; and that, there's reason to conclude, was upon the Command and Institution of Christ himself to them : for whereas he continu'd forty Days on Earth after his Resurrection, before he ascended into Heaven, it is said in that time, *He gave Commandments unto his Apostles, and spake unto them of the things pertaining unto the Kingdom of God*, Acts 1. 2, 3. He instructed them how they should change the bodily Sacrifices of Beasts, into the spiritual Sacrifices of Prayer and Praises ; the Sacrament of Circumcision, into that of Baptism ; the Sacrament of the Passover, into that of the Lord's Supper : and it's very probable they were likewise instructed then touching the Change of the

556 *Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.*

the Sabbath into the Lord's Day. To which agreeth that of learned *Junius*, who says positively, That the Change of the Sabbath was, not by the Tradition of Men, but by the Observation and Appointment of Christ; who both on the Day of his Resurrection, and on every seventh Day after, till his Ascension into Heaven, appear'd to his Disciples, and came into their Assemblies. Hereupon we read, the *Apostles* met together on every first Day of the Week, to preach the Word, and to communicate the Lord's Supper; *John* 20. 19, 26. *Acts* 2. 1. & 20. 7, &c. And we find it expressly ordain'd by the Apostle *Paul*, that the weekly Collection for the Poor should be on that Day, *1 Cor.* 16. 1, 2. Their assembling together to partake of the Ordinances of God being on that Day, they had thereby opportunity for it: Works of Charity suting well with the Duties of Piety; and in that, by the Ordinances then dispens'd, they might be stir'd up to a more free and chearful Contribution; the Apostle might upon these Accounts ordain also, that the Collections for the Poor should be on the same Day.

V. Another Argument proving the first Day of the Week, call'd the Lord's Day, to be the true Christian Sabbath now under the Gospel, may be taken from the constant Practice of the Church and People of God in all Ages since the Apostles times: as it was the Practice of the *Apostles* themselves (which is of it self a sufficient Argument to warrant the Day, they being guided by the Spirit of Christ in an especial manner;) so it does clearly appear to have been the Practice of all holy Men since the Apostles Times to observe this Day, and that under the Name of the *Lord's Day* (as *Eusebius* testifies in his *Ecclesiastical History*, lib. 4.) as being instituted by Christ, and ordain'd afterwards by the Apostles. A seventh Day has been always set apart for the solemn Worship of God ever since the Creation, and such a Seventh as never a Week in the Alteration was without a Sabbath, and never a Week had two Sabbaths; for as the Week ended with the former Sabbath, so the next Week began with the other: which could not have been, if any other Seventh Day had been chosen to be the time of the Lord's Resurrection; which is therefore very observable.

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day. 557

If any ask why the Change of the Day is not more clearly express'd in the New Testament? It may be answer'd, because there was no Question mov'd about the same in the Apostles times: which may likewise be a reason why in the New Testament there is no express Command for the baptizing of Infants in particular; namely, because there was no Doubt or Question mov'd about it in the Apostles Times. The Spirit of Christ knew the Mind of Christ, when he entitl'd this *first Day* of the Week to *him*; and from all that has been said, we must necessarily infer the *Sanctification* of it. It needed not to be committed to Writing in so many express words, the Apostles having abrogated that particular seventh Day, as it had reference to the *Jews*; and by their Practice among the *Gentiles*, shew'd the first Day was to be observ'd in the stead of it, and the Sanctification of it was taught by the fourth Commandment. This being premis'd,

We next come to the manner how we should sanctify the Lord's Day; for which, take these Directions:

1. We ought to prepare for the *Sabbath* before it comes, by a prudent Care so to dispose and dispatch all our worldly Businesses and Affairs, that they may be off our Hands, and out of our Minds (as much as possible) on that Day, that so our Hearts may be more free and fit for those spiritual Duties that are then requir'd of us.

2. To the Sanctification of the Lord's Day, two things are requir'd: *1st*, An observing a Rest. *2dly*, A consecrating of that Rest wholly to the Worship and Service of God.

1st, There must be a Resting,

1. From all the ordinary *Works* of our Calling, *Exod.* 20. 9, 10. What is got on that Day, we cannot expect should be blessed to us, but that (being contrary to the Command of God) it should prove like *Achan's* Wedg of Gold, which brought a Curse upon all the rest, which he had lawfully gotten.

2. From all kinds of *Recreations*; which tho they may be lawful at other times, yet are unlawful on the Lord's Day, being expressly forbidden by God himself, *Isa.* 58. 13. and it is found by Experience, that they do more steal away our Affections from spiritual Duties, and distract us more in God's Service, than the very Works of our Calling do.

3. From

558 Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

3. From all *immoderate* Eating or Drinking, so much as to cause Sleepiness, and to hinder us in our Attendance upon the Ordinances of God. And tho it be lawful on this Day to make such Provision as shall be convenient for our own Family, and for the Relief of our poor Neighbours; yet even this should be so order'd, as may be least injurious to Servants, and that those under our Charge may not be unnecessarily kept from the publick Ordinances: *Joshua 24. 15.*

4. From all *worldly Words*, and discoursing of our *secular* Affairs; *Isa. 58. 13. Not speaking thy own Words.* The Lord having commanded the whole Man to rest from worldly Works, he commands the Tongue to rest from talking of worldly Matters.

5. From *worldly Thoughts* as much as we can; for,

(1.) Know that every Commandment extends to our very *Thoughts*, as well as to the outward Actions.

(2.) That the Lord requireth not only the outward Man and external Actions to be consecrated unto him, but more especially the inward Man; *Prov. 23. 26. Rom. 10. 10.* in which regard we ought (as much as possibly we can) to sequester our Thoughts from worldly things, that they may be wholly taken up with spiritual and heavenly Meditations. And how much then should we be watchful over our whole Man against every Sin? for what greater Indignity can we offer unto God, than to serve the Devil in any of the Works of Darkness, especially in that Portion of Time, which is solemnly set apart and consecrated to the Honour and Service of God?

2dly, It is not enough that we keep a Rest, but we must consecrate that Rest wholly to the Worship and Service of God. *We must remember the Sabbath-Day to keep it holy*; for this is the chief End, wherunto the outward Rest tendeth: making it our Delight to spend the whole time of the Lord's Day (excepting so much of it as is to be taken up in the Works of Necessity and Mercy, and such as are needful for the comfortable passing of the Sabbath) in the publick and private Exercises of God's Worship and Service; such as Prayer, reading the Scriptures, preparing for the publick Duties, attending on the Word, singing the Praises of God, private Meditation on that which hath been read or preach'd, Repetition thereof in the Family, instructing Children and

Servants,

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day. 559

Servants, and religious Conference, to make the publick Ordinances the more profitable. Rise early on this Day especially, (if it will stand with your Health, and not hinder your Fitness for spiritual Exercises thro Drowsiness afterward) that you may offer up the best of your time to the Lord; and in regard of secret and Family-Duties, that are to be perform'd before your Attendance on the publick Ordinances, that one Duty may not jostle out another, nor that you should be straiten'd of time in any of them. In Prayer on this Day, seek the Lord on behalf of his *Ministers*, Eph. 6. 19. Col. 4. 3, that God would give them a *Door of Utterance*, that they may open their Mouths boldly to publish the *Mysteries of the Gospel*, that his Presence may be with them (according to his gracious Promise) to the End of the World, Mat. 28. 20. To succeed and bless their Labours every where, for the Conviction and Conversion of unconverted Sinners to himself, and for the farther Edification and building up of his Church and People in their holy Faith; and for your *Minister* in particular, that he may speak the Word truly, sincerely, powerfully and profitably, delivering that which is sutable and seasonable to your Condition, and the rest of the Congregation.

So likewise lift up your Hearts to the Lord, on the behalf of your selves and Families (if you have any) both with and for them; that all worldly wandering Thoughts may be banish'd out of your Minds, that would distract them in the Duties you are to be engag'd in; that he would give you and them attentive Minds, and understanding Hearts in the hearing of the Word, with Wisdom to apply, Judgment to discern, and Faith to believe whatsoever shall be deliver'd to you from the Word of God, which is the only Touchstone and Standard of the Truth; and also for retentive Memories, and Grace to practise what you shall hear, that so the Word may prove unto you and them a *Savour of Life unto Life*, and not a *Savour of Death unto Death*.

The Duties of reading the Word and Prayer, are to be perform'd not only in secret, but likewise with your Families, before you go to the publick Ordinances; and pray with them, as for other things, so especially for the Influences of God's Grace, and the Income of his Spirit upon

560 Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

upon your Hearts and Spirits, in the holy Duties you shall be engag'd in, that so you may perform them after such a manner, as Glory may redound to God's Name, and some spiritual Good and Advantage to your own Souls.

Set your selves as in the Sight and Presence of God, in all his Ordinances, who not only observeth your outward Carriage and Behaviour, but likewise understandeth all the Imaginations of your Hearts, and is privy to every wandering Thought, in praying, hearing, and other holy Duties; which will be a special Means to keep your Minds from roving in them: When you are engag'd in Prayer, remember you are then speaking to the Lord, in whose immediate Presence you are, who will be *sanctify'd of all that approach unto him*, Lev. 10. 3. And when you are hearing, remember the Lord himself is speaking to you; look upon the Minister as the Mouth of Christ, and his *Ambassador*, speaking to you in his Name, and delivering his Word and Message to you, that you may receive it not as the Word of Man, but as the Word of Christ himself; Luke 10. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 28. 1 Thess. 2. 13.

The Repetition thereof afterward in and with the Family, examining what is remember'd severally, and explaining the same to them, is commended to us by the *Practice* and *Example* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; who when he was come home, said unto his Disciples, Mat. 13. 51. *Have ye understood all these things?* viz. that he had preach'd to the Multitude. And St. Mark saith, Mark 4. 34. *When they were alone, he expounded all things to his Disciples.* Hence one observeth, that Christ, by his Example, does instruct every Master of a Family how to carry himself, in reference to those under his Charge, on the Lord's Day, after their Departure from the publick Congregation; *Chemnit. Exam. cap. de Dieb. Fest.* This Practice may be of great Benefit both to your selves and them.

1. In respect of your selves; for the more you build up others, the more your selves are built up in Knowledge, Faith, and every Grace: *Prov. 11. 25.*

2. In respect of *Children* and *Servants*, it will make them to hearken more attentively to that which is deliver'd in the publick Congregation. And,

3. It

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day. 561

3. It would much help both you and them in understanding, believing, and remembring what you have heard; the repeating, conferring of it, and examining the Proofs for the Confirmation of it.

Now as to those Works of Mercy, which are to be perform'd on the Lord's Day, they are such as concern, (1.) The *Souls*. (2.) The *Bodies* of our selves and Neighbours.

Those that concern the *Soul*, are such as these;

To instruct the *Ignorant* as we have Opportunity, to draw Sinners to Repentance, to comfort the Comfortless, to reprove and rebuke such as are scandalous and offensive in their ways, to resolve the Doubtful, to strengthen and establish such as are weak in *Grace*.

The Works of Mercy, which concern the *Body*, are, Visiting the Sick, and such as are otherwise restrain'd of Liberty; relieving such as are in want, 1 Cor. 16. 1, 2. apparelling our selves, refreshing our Bodies with Food, &c. by a moderate use whereof we are enabled more chearfully to perform the Duties of the Day. But herein observe carefully not to spend more time about them than is necessary; and truly since the Lord is so good and gracious to us as to afford us some part of his own Day for the Refreshment of our Bodies, far be it from us to abuse his Goodness, by lavishing away more time therein than needs must. Let them also be done as *Sabbath-Day's Works*.

1. By doing them for this *End*, and with an *Eye* to it, that thereby you may be the better enabled to serve God in the Duties of his Worship and Service with Chearfulness the rest of his Day; your weak Bodies being refresh'd thereby, and your Spirits reviv'd.

2. By endeavouring to spiritualize and raise heavenly Meditations from the same; from every thing we may, and should endeavour to draw Matter of spiritual Meditation, labouring to keep our Hearts in an holy Frame all the day long.

Now if you ask, What is meant by Works of absolute *Necessity*? They are, in *general*, such as must needs be done, and yet could not be done the Day before the Sabbath, nor put off to the Day after, without prejudice. But on the other side, such things as do no way further the Sanctification of the Day, but rather hinder the same,

562 *Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.*

and may as well be done the Day before, or the Day after, or some other time, ought not to be done on the *Lord's Day*.

Now to quicken you to a conscionable Observation of the foregoing Directions, consider,

1. A right Sanctification of the Lord's Day maketh much to the *Honour* of God. Observe what the Lord himself saith to his Church in this case by his Prophet *Isaiah*; Chap. 58. 13. *If thou turn away thy Foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy Pleasure on my holy Day, and call the Sabbath a Delight, the Holy of the Lord honourable, and shalt honour him, &c.* By a right and faithful sanctifying of the Sabbath, which he has especially appropriated to himself, we honour God.

2. The Sanctification of the Sabbath is very profitable to *our selves*; the more careful and faithful any are in sanctifying the Sabbath, the greater Blessing they may expect upon their Labour on the other part of the Week. It's a blessed Day to the careful Observers of it, and sanctify'd to many gracious Purposes: *The Sabbath was made for Man*, said our Saviour, *Mark* 2. 27. that is, for Man's great Benefit and Advantage. That great and excellent Man the Lord Chief Justice *Hale* hath declar'd, That when he most carefully and conscientiously observ'd the Lord's Day, he found God blessed him more especially that Week after: and it is not our own Labour and Toiling, but *the Blessing of God that maketh rich*, *Prov.* 10. 22. The same Observation was also made by the late Queen *Mary* of pious Memory, as the Reverend Bishop *Burnet* hath recorded of her in the Life of that excellent *Queen*.

And then consider that which is chiefly to be observ'd, That God hath blessed and sanctify'd this Day, as a time wherein he will more especially confer spiritual Blessings on the careful Observers of it. This was one great End why the Sabbath was ordain'd, that God might by it, in the use of his Ordinances, enrich our Souls with spiritual Blessings in heavenly things; and accordingly the Sanctification of it is an especial means both to beget and to strengthen Grace in us: *Ezek.* 20. 12, 20. The Lord hath ordain'd it to be as a *Market-Day* to the Soul; and were we but as sensible of the Good of our Souls, and of our spiritual Wants, as we are of our Bodies, and the

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day. 563

the Necessities of them, we should as willingly be depriv'd of those Opportunities we have of providing for the Supply of our bodily Wants, as we would be of these Opportunities on the *Lord's Days*, of providing for our Souls.

3. A right Sanctification of the Sabbath is very delightful to the People of God, in that they enjoy intimate *Society* and *Communion* with God, in his Ordinances on that Day, which is the greatest Happiness poor Creatures can possibly attain unto in this Life; it being an Heaven upon Earth to enjoy Communion with God, and some degree of those heavenly Joys which we shall enjoy hereafter more fully in Heaven: and how should the Consideration hereof stir us up to a careful and conscientious sanctifying of the Lord's Day, that so we may taste of those sweet Comforts and Refreshments, which others have so plentifully enjoy'd?

4. Consider the Equity of the Duty to sanctify this Day, for in that the Lord hath afforded us *Six* Days in *Seven* for our own Work, and reserv'd to himself but *One* for his Worship and Service; whereas he might have requir'd six Days for his Worship, and afforded but one for our Work. Is it not most just and equal, that we should make Conscience of giving unto God his Day, by consecrating of it wholly to his Worship and Service? As *Joseph* said to his Mistress, when she tempted him to Uncleaness, *Gen. 39. 9.* in like manner let us answer every Temptation to mispend that precious time, viz. that God, the Sovereign Lord and Master of the World, has kept back no time from me but one Day, because it was his; *How then can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?*

5. By the careful Observation of the Lord's Day, we continue a thankful Remembrance of the two great Benefits both of Creation and Redemption, which contain a short Abridgment of true Religion. The Sabbath duly observ'd, is a Type of the everlasting Rest that remains for the People of God in the other World. How then can they think to come to Heaven, and to keep an everlasting Sabbath, in adoring and praising God there, to whom the Celebration of a weekly Sabbath is here so tedious and irksom? This every true Christian is to take care to do, and that those also that are under his

Charge do the like; and to resolve with pious *Joshua*, That he and his House will serve the Lord, *Joshua 24. 15.* It is farther to be observ'd, that *True Religion*, and the *Power* of Godliness have there usually most flourish'd, where the Lord's Day hath been most conscientiously observ'd; and seldom shall we see in any Person or Family, or Society of Men whatever, any great Seriousness or Savour in Matters of Religion, where the Sabbath is neglected. Many remarkable Instances have been given of God's Judgments on Sabbath-Profaners, as may be seen in *Mr. Clark's Examples*, *Turner Of remarkable Providences*, and some other Authors.

C H A P. XXVII.

Of Hearing the Word.

TAKE heed how you hear, is the Counsel of our blessed Lord, *Luke 8. 18.* Our Lot is cast in an Age, wherein (thro the great Mercy of God) we have much good Preaching, but we see not those gracious Effects of the Word that were to be wish'd; and this is certainly one great Reason of it, so few take care to hear in a right manner. That we may therefore so hear as to profit thereby,

1. We must prepare our Hearts before we go to hear; rash entering on Duties is seldom successful. If the Ground is not prepar'd, the Seed is lost that is sown therein: *Plow up the fallow Ground of your Hearts*, says the Prophet, *Jer. 4. 3.* Sow not among Thorns. In a fallow Piece of Ground, Briars, Weeds and Thistles are apt to grow; and such a thing is Man's Heart naturally, which if let alone, and no Pains taken with it, will quickly be overgrown with hurtful *Cares*, stinking *Lusts*, and distemper'd *Affections*: and therefore *St. James* adviseth, *James 1. 21.* that before we go to hear the Word, we should lay apart all Filthiness, and Superfluity of Naughtiness; i. e. an evil Frame of Heart: and how hard a Matter that is, every true and sincere Christian experienceth. That holy Man *Gershon* professeth, he many times

times spent some Hours before he could get his Heart in tune for holy Duties. To help us therefore in our Preparation before we hear the Word,

I. Lay aside (as much as possibly you can) all *worldly* Thoughts, Cares, and Businesses, that your Mind may be free for God, and the Impressions of his Holy Spirit: as we read of *Abraham*, Gen. 22. 5. that when he went up to the *Mount* to offer *Sacrifice*, he left his Servants and the *Asses* in the Valley behind him; so should we all our worldly Cares and Concerns, when we go to worship God, or to hear his Word.

II. Consider and meditate on the great Importance of the Word; it's the ordinary Means God hath appointed, for the working the great Work of our Conversion, without which no Salvation can be expected; and for the edifying and building up those that are already savingly wrought upon: Jam. 1. 18. *Of his own Will begat he us by the Word of Truth.* Rom. 10. 17. *Faith comes by Hearing.* See also 1 Cor. 4. 15. (thro the Operation of the blessed Spirit of God in the Word) *it's the Power of God to Salvation.* Rom. 1. 16. Labour therefore highly to value and esteem the preaching of the Gospel, and public Ordinances. God hath appointed them not in Sovereignty only, but for our Good. As our Saviour says of the *Sabbath*, Mark 2. 27. so we may say of all the *Ordinances* of God, they were ordain'd for Man, for his Good and Benefit, and not Man made for them. And tho it's true God himself is not ty'd to Means, nor to any of his own Ordinances; yet he ties us to make use of them, when we may have them: his Spirit usually working in and by the Means, and rarely (if ever) when the ordinary Means are slighted and neglected.

Consider also the Intent of the Word is not only to regenerate, but to nourish, increase, and perfect the Graces of God's Children, Eph. 4. 11, 12. They that know most, may learn more; we need new Enforcements of Duty: our Affections are dull, and need new Excitement, and we may receive farther Benefit from a different handling of what we knew before.

III. Consider, when we are going to hear the Word, that we are going to meet the Great God of Heaven and Earth, a God who is not to be dallied with, but *will be sanctify'd in all them that come near him*, Lev. 10. 3. &

Exod. 19. 10. We should not only wash our *Clothes* (as the *Israelites* were to do when they went to hear the *Law*) but endeavour to cleanse our *Hearts* (as the Apostle *James* exhorts) from *all Filthiness*, &c. and receive with *Meekness* the engrafted Word, that is able to save our *Souls*. If we find our *Spirits* slight and wandering, in order to the fixing them, and making them serious, consider with what *Awe* and *Trembling* the *Israelites* went to receive the *Law* of God, the Mount being on a *Flame* of *Fire*, and the *Trumpet* sounding louder and louder. Labour thus to defeat the *Devil's* Malice herein, by introducing into your *Mind* such useful and profitable *Thoughts*: Think, as *Jacob* said of *Bethel*, *Surely the Lord is in this place*, Gen. 28. 16. The *Apprehension* of God's *Presence*, in the *Assembly* of his *People*, will be a *Means* to preserve in us an awful and reverent *Disposition* of *Soul*.

IV. Beg that the *Lord* will fix your *Mind*, and make it serious; that he would enlighten it, and open your *Heart* as he did the *Heart* of *Lydia*, Acts 16. 14. and give you a clear and right *Understanding* of those *Truths* that concern your *Salvation*, and a *Heart* to believe and embrace them, in the love of them; that they may not float in the *Phantasy* only, but sink down into the *Heart*: Rom. 10. 10. *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness*, that it may close with *Truth*, and love it and embrace it. Beg also that the *Holy Spirit* would set in with the preaching of the *Word*, and make it effectual, for the beating down of your *Corruptions*, and bringing into *Captivity* every *Thought* to the *Obedience* of *Christ*. Isa. 8. 11. it's said, *The Lord spake with a strong Hand* (and not his *Voice* only.) Pray therefore thus: *Lord*, speak to my *Lusts* and *Corruptions* this day with a *strong Hand*, let them feel thy *Power*, and the *Strength* of thine *Arm*, that so they may be effectually destroyed in me.

V. Labour to come with a teachable and tractable *Frame* of *Spirit*. Watch and pray, that you may be preserv'd from a cavilling *Spirit*, in hearing the *Word*, that is ready to frame *Objections* against it; and from such a *wrathful* *Spirit* likewise, as is ready to rise up in *Arms* against the just *Reproofs*, *Warnings*, and *Admonitions* of it. It's a *guilty* *Conscience* usually that thinks the

the Minister aims at him in particular, and intends his Disgrace, in denouncing the Threatnings of the Word. Be watchful also against an earthly and obdurate Disposition, that is Sermon-Proof, and resolv'd not to be aw'd and influenc'd by the preaching of it; as the *Pharisees* and *Lawyers* were said to *reject the Counsel of God against themselves*, Luke 7. 30. and the *Jews* to put it from them, *Acts* 13. 46. but a meek and tender Spirit is apt to receive Impressions from it, as we may observe in Persons, whose Hearts are soften'd by Afflictions. Come with such a Frame of Spirit to hear the Word, as they did, *Acts* 10. 33. who said, *We are all here present before the Lord, to hear the things that are commanded thee of God.*

VI. Come with an *Appetite*, a longing Desire to profit by the Word, and an Expectation to profit. Wait for the Word *as for Rain*, as *Job* speaks of those, *Chap.* 29. 23. who gasp'd after it as the chapp'd Earth for Showers. *Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after Righteousness, for they shall be filled*, is our Saviour's own Promise, *Mat.* 5. 6. And, Oh! that there were such Divine Affections in us as was in holy *David*, and that we could truly say, *My Soul is athirst for God, even the living God*; My Soul pants after Christ, after his pardoning Mercy, and sanctifying Grace, *as the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks*; we might hope then to see Sermons work other Effects than they now do. But when we come with Prejudices and Prepossessions against the Simplicity of the Gospel, the most Evangelical Truths are to such but as a Banquet of Sweetmeats unto Swine, that had rather feed upon Husks. Having sought the Lord, and taken pains with your Heart before, come with Hopes and Expectation to profit by what you hear, according to the gracious Promises of the Gospel, *Isa.* 55. 10, 11. *Mat.* 7. 7, &c. It's often said in the Gospel, *Be it unto thee according to thy Faith*. But we must not ground our Expectation on the Parts or Gifts of the Minister, or on any thing but on God's Promise, looking for his Blessing to accompany his own Ordinance, *Isa.* 48. 17. it's he only that *teacheth* us to profit, and makes the Word successful and operative to us.

VII. Hear with the most fix'd Attention that possibly you can; attend with Reverence and Seriousness: many weighty and saving Truths are lost by negligent Hearing.

ing. Tho we cannot expect to be totally free from wandering *Thoughts*, yet we ought to be very watchful, and not to allow our selves in *them*; but when we perceive our Hearts gone, speedily to recal them. Watch against and use all proper means to prevent *Drowsiness* and *Dulness* under the preaching of the Word, that none of those Truths may be lost, which duly minded may tend to your everlasting Salvation. Affect not only new things, as those the Apostle speaks of, *2 Tim. 4. 3, 4.* that had *itching Ears*, and *turn'd them away from the Truth*. Plain Doctrines, that tend to the Conviction of Sin, that discover the Necessity of Conversion, that shew Man's lost and undone Condition by Nature, and his own personal Sins, and his only Remedy by Christ, the Necessity of Holiness and new Obedience; such serious Truths, tho not so relishing to some curious Ears, yet are those that will prove most advantageous and profitable to us for saving Ends and Purposes.

VIII. Apply what you hear to your self; *Job 5. ult.* Say not within your self, This Reproof concerns such a one, &c. and not me. It's the Application of the Plaister that makes it useful: *Acts 2. 23.* we must mix Faith with the Word. *Heb. 4. 2.* the Apostle speaks of some that profited not by the Word, *because they did not mix it with Faith*. How many Sermons has Unbelief made unsuccessful! tho the Apostle tells us, that even the Devils themselves believe and tremble; which is more than many a wicked Man doth.

IX. Lift up your Heart in frequent, mental, ejaculatory Prayers to the Lord, to set the Truths you hear home upon your Soul; saying, Lord help me to remember and practise *this* Lesson; Lord help me to forsake *this* Sin; Lord strengthen my Faith in the Belief of *this* Truth: as the Disciples, when told how oft they should forgive an offending Brother, *Luke 17. 5.* they instantly pray, *Lord, increase our Faith.*

X. Retire your self, and meditate on the Truths you have heard, and labour to fasten them by Prayer on your Heart: 'tis said, *Mary ponder'd those Sayings in her Heart, Luke 2. 19.* One main Reason why Sermons have no more effect, is, because People so soon forget them: and why do they forget them so soon, but because they do not consider and meditate on them, when

they have heard them? How few will spend a secret Hour, or half an Hour, in considering and meditating on what they have heard? But for this end, says the Apottle, Heb. 2. 1. *We ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.*

XI. Be not a bare *Hearer*, but a *Doer* of the Word, Speedily set upon the practice of what you have learn'd to be your *Duty*, otherwise you *deceive your own Souls*, Jam. 1. 22. Some do not care to hear, because they have no mind to practise: some hear, and rest in it. 'Tis Practice that proclaims the Sincerity of our Profession, and is the best Commendation of what we have heard.

Now to excite and stir us up to the Practice of these Directions;

1. Consider, such as wilfully neglect to prepare their Hearts before they come to hear, do tempt God to withdraw the Assistance and Blessing of his Holy Spirit from them, when they are come. If the Ground be not well prepar'd, we do in vain expect a Crop.

2. Consider, the Devil's Care is not only to disturb us at the Ordinance, but to indispose us for it before we come. He is stirring early, on the *Lord's Day* especially, and will be presenting and suggesting something to us, to unfit and indispose us for the Duties of the Day. It was the Experience of one going to Church on the *Lord's Day*, that she felt an unusual Backwardness and Indisposition to it, and with very great difficulty prevail'd with her self to go in; and it pleas'd the Lord to make that Sermon of more than ordinary benefit and advantage to her. This Account I had from the Person her self. Another Instance of Satan's Malice and Diligence to hinder spiritual Duties and the Efficacy of them, I heard from a near Relation of the Person, an experienc'd Christian, who told me of it: The Person was under Weakness, and in Bed lifting up her Heart to God in Prayer, the Room on a sudden was very light (tho late at night) and the Devil appear'd in a visible Shape of a Man by the Bed-side, and furiously bid her leave her praying, or he would make her: but it pleas'd the Lord to give that Courage to her, that she was enabled to answer thus; *Satan, if thou hast any thing to say to me, go to JESUS CHRIST,*

CHRIST, *and he will answer for me.* Upon which he disappear'd, having first violently, to her Apprehension, laid his hands on her Arm and Neck, which left a Blackness on her Arm some Weeks after: but she receiv'd not any manner of hurt by what he had done. This Instance manifests how malicious and restless Satan is to hinder religious Duties, and whatever he thinks would tend to our spiritual Good and Advantage: and he is not a less busy and dangerous Enemy when he appears not visibly to us, than when he *so discovers* himself.

3. Consider the present Advantage it usually brings, in promoting our Appetite to spiritual things, and making us relish them better. Hereby also we may come better to understand our selves, and the Case of our own Souls; our Graces being thereby increas'd, and the Work of Heaven going better on.

4. If we make conscience of these Duties, thus to behave our selves before, in, and after the Ordinances; we shall find it a great Evidence of the Sincerity and Uprightness of our Hearts. Outward Respects may make People come to hear; but to take pains with their Hearts thus (before-hand) argues a true Desire after Communion with God, and real Willingness to profit by the Word, and to grow in Grace.

5. Consider what a great Mercy it is to enjoy the Gospel. God hath not done so for every Nation, as for *this*; no Island so far from *Jerusalem* had the Light of the Gospel so soon as this had: but if we slight it, for ought we know we may quickly forfeit it, and provoke God to take it from us.

6. Consider, tho the Gospel may continue to the Nation, yet you or I may quickly be depriv'd of our personal Opportunities of enjoying it. It is reported of one, that lying on his Death-Bed, he cry'd out, *Call Time back! Call Time back!* Thus may many cry out, that now enjoy the Means of Grace, *Call Sermons back! Call Sabbaths back!* but all in vain, if they neglect the present Opportunity and Season of Grace. The Spirit of God will not always strive with the Children of Men; the present Sermon may be the last that ever we may hear (some one Sermon will be the last :) And let us think thus with our selves; Such a Gale of the Spirit as now I feel, may never be afforded me again: shall I be
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so foolish then, as not to yield to these blessed Motions? To-day let us hear his Voice, and not harden our Hearts, Heb. 3. 8. Therefore shall ye lay up these my Words in your Heart and in your Soul; and bind them for a Sign upon your Hand, that they may be as Frontlets between your Eyes, and you shall teach them your Children, &c. Deut. 11. 18—21.

C H A P. XXVIII.

Of Singing of Psalms.

LET not that excellent and heavenly Ordinance of Singing Psalms be neglected; to lift up the Praises of the Most High, *singing with Understanding*, and *making Melody to God in your Hearts*, Eph. 5. 19. That this is a Gospel-Duty, may be prov'd by many undeniable Arguments, besides the express Testimony of the Scriptures.

1. In that it was an antient Ordinance of God in the Church, and a Part of Divine Worship, and was never repeal'd under the Gospel. Hence the Psalmist calls upon and excites himself and others to this Duty, *Psal. 95. 1, 2. O come let us sing unto the Lord, let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our Salvation; let us come before his Presence with Thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise to him with Psalms.* And it is sort'd with other Duties that are of a perpetual Obligation, as *Prayer, Hearing the Word, &c.* ver. 6, 7. 'Twas practis'd by those eminent Saints of God, *Moses, Deborah, Barak, David the Sweet-finger of Israel, Solomon*, and others; whose Songs and Hymns we have recorded in the Old Testament.

2. The Prophecies in Scripture that foretel the State of the Church under the Gospel, speak of Psalms being to be used as a part of God's Worship and Service then. Compare *Rom. 15. 9.* with *Psal. 18. 49.*

3. We have several Exhortations to it, in the New Testament; Eph. 5. 18. *Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess, but be fill'd with the Spirit.* Ver. 19. *Speaking to your selves in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing and making melody in your Heart to the Lord.* Col.

3. 16. *Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all Wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms, and Hymns, and spiritual Songs, singing and making melody in your Hearts to the Lord.* Jam. 5. 13. *Is any among you afflicted? let him pray: Is any merry? let him sing Psalms.*

It's spoken generally, *Is any merry? let him sing*, &c. not that it is unlawful to sing at other times (for then it might be argu'd as well, that 'tis not lawful to pray, but when sad and afflicted) but as Prayer is the best Remedy for Sorrows; so Thanksgiving, or singing to God's Praise, is the special proper Duty in the time of Mercies and Comforts: In Misery, the proper Duty is Prayer; in Prosperity, to give Thanks.

4. We have Directions and Rules given us how to sing in a right manner, viz. *with Grace in our Hearts to the Lord*; which Directions were needless, if singing of Psalms were not a Duty under the Gospel.

5. We find it practis'd by our blessed Saviour and his Disciples; Mat. 26. 30. *And when they had sung an Hymn, they went out into the Mount of Olives.* So also by Paul and Silas, Acts 16. 25. *And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang Praises unto God.*

6. In the primitive Times it was frequently practis'd, insomuch that the Heathens took notice of this Use and Custom among the Christians. Pliny writing to Trajan the Emperor, tells him of the Christians Morning-Hymns or Psalms to Christ their God, as an usual Practice in their solemn Worship.

II. That the singing of David's Psalms is lawful and warrantable, is apparent thus.

1. Because no Composures can be equal to those of God's Spirit. If any Psalms therefore are to be sung, then surely such as are given by divine Inspiration, as David's were; those excellent Composures being part of the Word of God, and full of heavenly Matter tending to Instruction and Consolation, and being consign'd to the Use of the Church, surely may very freely be used by us, especially when the Matter thereof suits much to our Condition. Observe that, 2 Chron. 29. 30. *Moreover Hezekiah the King, and the Princes, commanded the Levites to sing Praises to the Lord with the Words of David, and Asaph the Seer; and they sang Praises with Gladness.*

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2. It was the Custom of the *Jews* to sing the Psalms of *David*. This they did in the Night of the Passover, they sang those six Psalms from the 113th to the 119th, which were call'd the great *Hallel* or *Hallelujah*; and it's very probable, Christ with his Disciples follow'd their Custom herein, because in many other things he observ'd their Passover Rites.

Obj. Some scruple to sing in a mix'd Congregation.

Ans. To render Praise, is a Duty all Men owe to God. *David* calls on all Creatures to sing Praises to God, *Psal.* 145. and all the Kingdoms of the Earth are bidden to praise the Lord, *Psal.* 68. 32. Tho therefore all do not praise God as they should, yet it is their Duty, and they sin more in not doing it at all. *Moses* and the Children of *Israel* sang Praises to God together, and yet there were some wicked Persons among them, that did not do it in a right manner; *Exod.* 15. If the Presence of wicked Men in the Worship of God should hinder the Acceptation of those that are sincere, the People of God were in a most sad condition; being never certain but some secret *Hypocrite* may be in the most select Assembly: but God will accept us according to our Integrity, and not our Company. He will hear the Bleating of one Sheep, tho in the midst of a thousand Wolves. If some do not their Duty as they should, must we neglect ours?

Obj. Why should we sing Psalms? Cannot we read them for our Instruction?

Ans. Singing of Psalms (according to the divine Appointment) will affect, and raise, and quicken the Heart to praise God. The Voice is a great help to quicken the Heart, both in Prayer and Singing: The People of God formerly practis'd it; they sang the great things that God had done for them, that their Hearts might be more affected, warm'd, rais'd, enliven'd, and lifted up in the Praises of God.

Obj. Is it seasonable to sing on Days of Fasting and Humiliation?

Ans. All Psalms are not fit for all Occasions; there ought to be a wise Choice made: Many of the Psalms of *David* were penn'd and sung when his Mind was full of Anguish and Grief, and so he eas'd his Heart, by lamenting his sad Condition before the Lord. Penitential Psalms

Psalms provoke to Sadness, as *Eucharistical* to Joy and Rejoicing.

Obj. David's Psalms do not suit our Conditions: must we tell God it is so with us as it was with David, when possibly it's nothing so?

Ans. All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, Reproof, Correction, Instruction, &c. 2 Tim. 3. 16. and written for our Learning and Comfort, Rom. 15. 14. The Psalms therefore are so. What Passage is there in the Psalms, but we may some way accommodate to our selves? Suppose David says, *I am not puffed in Mind*, Psal. 131. and you find your Heart prone to Pride; why here is a Word then of Admonition to you: so that while we are reciting and declaring David's humble Frame and Condition, we ought to lift up our Hearts to God, that he would work the like Frame in us: Lord, thy Servant David could truly say, *I am not puffed in Mind*; good Lord, grant me this Grace also. Suppose we cannot find in our selves such a Love to God's Law as was in David, Psal. 119. 97, &c. then there is a Word of Instruction to us, teaching us what we should do: we ought to pray to have such a divine Affection kindled in us, to the Law of God. So that we sing Psalms, as we read them, for the benefit and good use we may make of them. 'Tis therefore no more a Lye to sing them, than to read them; by both, we recite what God has reveal'd in his Word for our Admonition and Instruction, &c. And tho we cannot make all Passages in them our own, by using them for our selves, and in our own name (as David did) yet we may make them our own, by a sweet Meditation on them, for our Benefit and Edification.

Now for our Direction how we may practise this Duty of singing Psalms aright;

I. Sing with *Understanding*, and *Attention* of Mind to the Matter sung. Labour to understand the Mind and Meaning of the Holy Ghost, in the Psalm you sing; Psal. 47. 7. sing the Praises of God with Understanding.

II. Labour to sing with *Grace in your Heart*, that is, with a gracious Frame of Spirit. Our Singing must not be a Lip-Labour, an outward bodily Exercise only, pleasing our selves or others with the Tune of a Psalm; but we should look to it, that our Hearts be well tuned,

as

as *Mary's*, Luke 1. 46. *My Soul doth magnify the Lord, &c.*

-III. Endeavour to *exercise and act* those peculiar *Graces* which the Matter sung requires, and gives occasion to exercise : the Lord looks at the Heart, and how we are affected within.

1. Some Psalms are *Laudatory*, and set forth the high Praises of God, from the Consideration of his glorious Nature, Attributes, and Works. In singing these, we should stir up our Hearts to love God, to fear him, to trust in him ; and our Hearts should, with our Tongues, sound forth his Praises.

2. Some are *Petitionary*, containing Supplications for spiritual Blessings ; such as Pardon, Grace, the Favour of God ; or temporal, such as Direction, Protection, Provision, &c. Here we should look up to God as the only Author of these Mercies, and humbly pray to him for them.

3. Some are *Eucharistical*, containing Thanksgivings to God for Mercies receiv'd, private or publick, spiritual or temporal.

4. Some contain *Precepts and Instructions* to fear God, to love him, to walk in his Ways, being back'd with Promises to encourage us thereunto ; some declare the evil Ways of Sinners, and the Judgments of God that attend them, to deter us therefrom.

5. Some contain *Imprecations and Prayers* for Judgments on Enemies. Here we are not to pray for or wish the same Judgments on our private Enemies ; but we may think of and meditate on the fearful Judgments of God, that hang over the heads of all wicked and impenitent Sinners, that so we may fear to be like them.

6. Some contain the *sad Complaints* of the Church under Afflictions. Here we may meditate on the Afflictions and Sufferings of the Children of God, and lift up our Hearts to him ; begging earnestly of him, that he would please to comfort and support his suffering Servants, and to give us also suffering Graces.

IV. Let there be a wise Choice made of Psalms to be sung, according as our present Necessities and Occasions require.

V. Let your End in singing be, that God may be glorify'd, your selves and others edify'd, and that the Graces of God's Holy Spirit may be excited and exercis'd both in you and them.

Obj. Doth not what has been said here countenance the Cathedral Worship?

Ans. No, it rather condemns it, (if there had been nothing else to be objected against it) the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the King and Prophet of his Church, and who alone hath Power and Authority in it, not having appointed our Prayers to be put up in this way to him; but as in other things, so in this also, he instituted himself the Way of his own Worship, and set bounds thereto, which are not to be alter'd or invaded by any human Authority, or our own Inventions. This would be to charge the infinitely Holy and All-wise God with being defective in his own Institutions that he hath left us in his Word; who, as he was not short in Wisdom, that he could not, so neither in Goodness, that he would not appoint whatsoever was useful and necessary for the edifying of his Church, and the Comfort of his People: *Mat.* 28. 20. *Moses* was admonish'd of God, when he was about to make the Tabernacle, that he should make all things according to the Pattern shew'd him in the Mount, *Heb.* 8. 5. *Exod.* 25. 40. And *St. Paul* assures us, he deliver'd nothing but what he had receiv'd of the Lord. Now we find not any Warrant under the New-Testament Dispensation, for that Practice of *chanting* or *singing* when we are, or should be, in the most serious and solemn manner presenting our Requests and Supplications to the Lord, and making an humble Acknowledgment of our Sins unto him. We find not any Precept or Example for it, either by our blessed Lord himself, or any of his Apostles, who were commanded to observe all things whatsoever he had enjoin'd and instructed them in, before his Ascension into Heaven. But this Practice was convey'd down to us from the Church of Rome, with other Ceremonious Worship; and prevail'd not till that Church begun in other things also to be corrupted, which was not till the Fourth Century, and when that too was drawing towards a close: and was then (when it appear'd) warmly oppos'd, as it hath been since, by Persons of greatest Worth and Eminence in the Christian Church, for a long time; both before, at, and after the Western Reformation. So that what was said by the Apostle *Paul* in another Case, *1 Cor.* 11. 16. may be truly said of this in the Gospel-Church, That neither in the time of

our blessed Lord himself, whilst he was upon Earth, nor in the time of the Apostles, or for several Ages afterward, there was no such Custom in any of the Churches of God.

C H A P. XXIX.

Of Family-Government.

IT is the Duty of every Governour of a Family, whom God by his Providence hath plac'd in that Station, to be very careful that not only themselves, but the rest of their Family also do faithfully serve the Lord.

I. There is great reason for it in respect of *God*, whose Honour (above all things) we should endeavour to advance : and what better Course can be taken for it, than to set up his Worship in our Houses and Families? Masters of Families (next to their own personal Homage to God, and particular Care of their own Souls) should especially take care that those under their Government may be God's faithful Subjects and Servants, and not Rebels against him, as all wicked ungodly Persons certainly are. And are they not guilty of the greatest Folly, that would desire to have such Children as dishonour their Creator, and live to the hurt of themselves and others?

II. In respect of our *Families*. The greatest Good we can possibly do them, is, to instruct them in the Principles of true Piety. To provide an Estate or Inheritance for Children ; Meat, Drink, and Wages for Servants ; is no more than sober Heathens do : what singular thing is this ? But to leave them rightly principled and instructed ; interested in the Covenant of Grace ; under the Favour, Blessing, and Protection of God : this is the Duty of Parents and Masters earnestly to seek and endeavour for them ; for this they may have cause to bless God for ever. How sad is it, when the Livelihood of Children here in this World is only provided for, and their Better Part neglected ; no care taken, what shall become of them hereafter ? whether God or Satan have the greatest Interest in their Hearts, or that

they shall be made happy, or be miserable in Hell for ever? And yet so they must be, if they live and die in Ignorance, Impenitency, and Unbelief. Good Education is the best Inheritance that Parents can leave to their Children: *Wisdom is good with an Inheritance*, Eccles. 7. 11. the greatest Good; but surely an Inheritance, without Wisdom and Grace to manage it, is a very pernicious thing to the Possessors of it, and it were much happier for them to have been left poor. And the truth is, if care be not taken of Persons in their younger Years (when they are most capable of the Impressions of Religion) to implant in them the substantial Principles of Christianity, true Religion, and the Fear of God; how can it reasonably be expected, they should be Instruments afterward of Good to others, which they have been themselves so little acquainted with; or fill up the Relations they are in, faithfully or comfortably to themselves or them? But they will almost necessarily and unavoidably be bad, in all Relations.

III. In respect of the *Church and Commonwealth*. A Family is the first Society, and a Seminary of the rest; it's made up of single Persons in several Relations. Towns, Congregations, Cities, Countries, are all made up of *several Families*; they are (as it were) the Hives out of which Swarms go forth into the World. To make Families good and religious (thro Grace) is the way to make good Magistrates, good Husbands, good Wives, good Masters, good Servants, good Neighbours. Families are the Nurseries of Church and State, and the Want of Family-Reformation is the Cause of most of the Miscarriages in Church and Commonwealth. If there be Ignorance, Profaneness, Error, Ungodliness in a Family, we shall soon hear of it, when the Branches of it are transplanted into the World. As therefore *Elisha* heal'd the naughty Waters, by casting Salt into the Spring, 2 *Kings* 2. 21. so let us labour to season our Families with true Religion and Piety: and tho, when all care is us'd, there may be some bad in the best Family; yet ordinarily God is pleas'd so to bless the Care and Endeavours of Religious Governours, that both the Church and Commonwealth reap the Fruit and Benefit of it afterward.

IV. In respect of *Our selves*. We should consider our Obligation hereto, both in respect of *Duty and Interest*.

I. Of

1. Of Duty.

(1.) All Authority over others, is a Talent intrusted to us by God for the good and benefit of others: and we must give an account to him how we have improv'd it; whether we have used it to his glory and for their good, or to their hurt and mischief.

(2.) Parents should consider that their Children are Parts of themselves; their Children a natural Part, as the rest of their Family are a civil and political Part: and they should account them so. And if any of these should miscarry thro their Fault and Negligence, what a perpetual Cut must it needs be to them? And it's very probable, at the Day of Judgment, wicked and negligent Masters of Families (next to God and their own Consciences) will find their most terrible Accusers will be those of their own House; nay, possibly those that came out of their own Bowels.

(3.) Parents in justice, and by way of reparation, ought to take great care of the Happiness of their Children: they have convey'd a sad Inheritance to them, in those corrupt and vicious Inclinations which are deriv'd from themselves unto them; and therefore have need to take all the care they can, that by Grace their Hearts and Natures may be savingly renew'd and sanctify'd, and those perverse Dispositions rectify'd and cured, which they have transmitted to them. And seeing God hath provided, by the abundant Grace of the Gospel, so powerful a Remedy for this hereditary Disease of our corrupt and degenerate Nature, they should do what lies in them that their Children may partake of the Benefit of it, by instructing them in the necessary and fundamental Principles of Christianity; in right and worthy Apprehensions of God, his holy Nature and Attributes, of the great Evil and Danger of Sin, of the Immortality of the Soul, of the Redemption of Sinners by the Lord Jesus Christ; of the Covenant of Grace (thro his Blood) and of the eternal Rewards and Punishments of the future State. And if these Principles take deep root in them whilst young, they will probably (thro the Blessing of God) continue with them, and stick by them all their days. And as this Work of Instruction is seasonable every day, and at all times of the Day, *Deut. 6. 7.* so it is peculiarly needful and seasonable to be perform'd on the

Lord's Day: and those that are most careful and conscientious herein, are likely to find the Blessing of God answerably upon their Endeavours.

2. Consider farther the Obligation of Parents and Masters of Families hereto, in point of *Interest*: for,

(1.) The Benefit is great that we shall reap thereby, even to our selves; this being the most likely way to bring Children and Servants to be obedient and faithful: when they have the Fear of God in their Hearts, they will then do their Duty for Conscience-sake. And such Persons in a Family are also a great Blessing to it: *Potiphar's* Family was blessed for *Joseph's*, and *Laban's* for *Jacob's* sake.

(2.) 'Tis a great Honour to a Family to be truly religious, to have their House a *Bethel*, a House of God, rather than a *Bethaven*, an House of Iniquity. Religious Families are dignify'd by the Apostle with the Title of *Churches*, Rom. 16. 5. Col. 4. 15.

(3.) It will bring much Comfort to us, both here and hereafter. What a Joy must it needs be to any serious Christian, to see his Family (thro the Blessing of God on his Care and Labour) to thrive in Piety, and walking in the Ways leading to Heaven? And with how much Comfort may he leave them when he comes to die, having this Testimony in his own Bosom, that he hath been faithful herein? *Eli* was charg'd with, and severely punish'd for the Sins of his Children, 1 *Sam.* 2. 29. because he had been too remiss in reprov'g of them. "Believe it (says worthy Mr. Rogers) every Governour of a Family is as deeply charg'd with the Souls of those under his Government, as any Pastor is with the Souls of that Flock which is committed to his Charge: nor will the publick Ministry become fruitful, if that which is sown in publick be not water'd in private, by Conference, Examination, and good Instruction. What can we more impute the Unprofitableness of our Ministry to, than to Masters and Parents Neglect of their Duties? You call our Congregations our Charge, and so they are; so are your Families also your Charge." Christian Parents should seriously consider, that they are to breed up their Children for God, and for the Good of the World wherein he hath placed us and them; and as they come out of their hands (if they

they live) probably they will prove Blessings or a Mis-
chief to it: so that they cannot be greater Benefactors
to Mankind and to the World, than by peopling it with
a religious Offspring. Good Children are the Hopes of
Posterity and future Times.

Now in order to the right Performance of this Duty,

I. Let Governours of Families begin at themselves, la-
bouring to reform what is amiss in themselves, *Mat. 7. 5.*
that so they may be exemplary in *Wisdom* and *Holiness*
to those under their Care. Let them humbly beg of
God those Graces and Abilities that may fit them for the
discharging of their Places. Inferiours mind more what
Superiours do, than what they say: he that walks dis-
orderly himself, cannot reasonably expect to reform his
Children or Servants, or keep his Family in order.

II. Let them be careful about the Constitution of their
Families: let them look well to it, that those that they
admit into their House (as near as they can guess) be
hopeful and tractable as to Religion. Let holy *David's*
Resolution be theirs, *Psal. 101. 6. Mine Eyes shall be upon*
the Faithful, that they may dwell with me; he that walketh
in a perfect way, he shall serve me.

III. Let them set up the Exercise of true Religion in
good earnest in their Families. Let them worship God
together Morning and Evening, offering up the spiritual
Sacrifice of Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving.
That this is their indispensable Duty, thus to pray in and
with their Families Morning and Evening, consider;

1. Is it not the Duty of all sincere Chris-
tians to make Religion the main Business of *Of Family-*
their Lives? to endeavour the spiritual and *Prayer.*
eternal Good of their Families, as well as
their temporal Good, and to win the Souls of those that
are under their Government to Christ? And how can
the Neglect of praying with them be consistent with such
a Concern for them?

2. Doth not the very Light of Nature seem to suggest,
we should begin and end the Day with God? And,

3. Was not Family-Worship the first Worship per-
form'd to God in the World for a long time?

4. It appears by the Divine Appointment, under the
Law, of their Evening and Morning Sacrifice; and doth
not the Apostle, in analogy to this continual and daily

Sacrifice, bid us *pray continually*? 1 Thess. 5. 17. Col. 4. 2.

5. Is not the Neglect of praying unto God, and calling upon his Name, given as a Character of those Heathenish Nations upon whom God intended to *pour forth his Fury*? Psal. 14. 4. & 79. 6. Jer. 10. ult.

6. From the Example of *Job's* offering Sacrifice, and praying for his Family when absent; is it not more than probable he did the like with them when present? seeing it's said, *Thus did Job continually*, Job 1. 5. and of *Queen Esther* and her Servants also, that they prayed and fasted together, *Esther* 4. 16.

7. From the Example of our blessed Saviour praying with his Family, *Luke* 9. 18. *As he was alone praying, his Disciples were with him*: that he was alone, not singly, but privately alone, appears by comparing this Place with *Mark* 4. 10. And doth not our Saviour confirm the same by the Lord's Prayer, and plainly teach us therein, that Christians should pray jointly as well as severally? *Our Father, &c. give us this Day our daily Bread, &c.*

8. The Apostle exhorts accordingly, to *pray with all Prayer*; i. e. with all manner of lawful Prayer, therefore with Family-Prayer, *Eph.* 6. 18.

9. It appears also by a Blessing promis'd to joint Prayer: *Mat.* 18. 19, 20. *I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on Earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven; for where two or three are gather'd together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them.*

Farther, should not every Christian Family be a little Church of Christ? *Rom.* 16. 5. 1 *Cor.* 16. 19. And is not a Church to pray together? *Acts* 12. 5, 12. & *Chap.* 2. 42.

Do not the Necessities of a Family also require it? They are join'd in Mercies, in Judgments, and often in Sins; should they not therefore join in Humiliations, Prayers, and Thanksgivings?

Farther, Houses as well as Temples were to be dedicated to God by the Inhabitants at their first Entrance into them, *Deut.* 20. 5. *Psal.* 30. *Tit.* and shall they not be us'd for his immediate Service and Worship jointly by the Family, as well as to eat and drink together in them?

them? Is there not as good Fellowship in holy Duties, as in merry Company, and idle Communication? Why should a Family do nothing jointly that tends to the Good of their Souls, when they do it daily for the Sustainance and Refreshment of their Bodies? Shall we not be willing God should be the Master of our Houses? Consider also,

Can a Family expect a Blessing from God, that lives in the constant Neglect of this Duty? Family Prosperity hath been experienc'd usually to have attended Family Piety: Prov. 3. 33. *The Curse of the Lord is in the House of the Wicked, but he blesteth the Habitation of the Just.* The Neglect of this Duty exposeth Families to many Judgments and Sins; Profaneness and Licentiousness are usually admitted in the stead of it, and these are follow'd with God's Wrath and Curse. Let not this Duty therefore of Family-Prayer, Morning and Evening, be neglected, upon any pretence whatsoever; and let all Persons be careful they be not slight and formal in the performance of it. And besides Prayer, let there be reading in course the Holy Scriptures, likewise other good Books seasonably, singing Psalms, catechizing, and private Instruction; a due care also that they sanctify the Lord's Day, by a diligent frequenting the publick Ordinances, and reviving by repetition in private, what they have heard in the publick, by religious Conference, and whatever else may conduce to the promoting each other's spiritual Interest, and to the encreasing true Piety and Godliness among them.

IV. Let Governors of Families call upon, and charge those that are under their Government, to pray privately and in secret, and not to content themselves only with the Family-Prayer, as too many do.

V. Let them keep (as much as may be) leud Persons out of their Families: when Swearers, Drunkards, Atheists, Scorners of Religion, are freely admitted and countenanc'd in a Family, Religion is not likely to thrive there.

VI. Be careful also to preserve your Families from Seducers and Soul-Deceivers: 2 John ver. 10. *If there come any unto you, and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your House, neither bid him God speed.*

VII. Let them watch carefully over their Families. The want of Vigilancy in the Governor, is usually the Fountain of most Disorders in the Family: Let there be Family-Discipline; let such as are unruly be admonish'd, and seek to reclaim them; and if incorrigible, and that they are separable Members, cast them out. Encourage those that *do well*, let them see you take notice as readily of their Well-doing as of their Faults. When there is Cause of rebuking any, let it be without Bitterness or Reviling; endeavour more by Strength of Reason to convince them of their Sins and Danger, and how to amend, than Heat of Anger to utter your own Displeasure. Let the Fault be made manifest to the Person offending, that his own Conscience may condemn him. Bitterness does often more harden the Heart, than reform the Life; and if Governors of Families would thus labour to discharge their Duties faithfully, they might be exceeding instrumental in promoting the Salvation of those that are under their Government, by their Prayers, Precepts, Example, prudent Admonitions, Reproofs, and constant Watchfulness over them. It is by their Care and Assistance that the Minister's Work may be very much promoted, and without this, the Minister's Success in the Reformation of a Town or Congregation is less to be expected. The Reformation both of Church and State must begin here, as was said before.

The Governor of a Family should look upon himself as Christ's Deputy in his own House, and (as it were) invested with his three Offices of Prophet, Priest, and King; in all which respects he is to be accountable to him. He should be,

1. A Prophet, to teach, instruct, catechize his Household, *Deut. 6. 7.* An uncatechis'd Head, and an unsanctify'd Heart do too frequently go together. The meanest have a Soul as precious as any other, and bought with the same infinitely valuable Blood of Christ. Our blessed Saviour hath set us a Pattern in performing this Duty, who instructed his Disciples, pray'd with them, taught them to pray, sung an Hymn with them; and can we follow a better Example? *Timothy* was train'd up by his Parents, and that from a Child, in the Holy Scriptures, *2 Tim. 3. 15.* Want of Instruction at home, as was observ'd before, is one main reason of the Unsuccessfulness of Preaching.

2. A

2. A Priest, to offer up the spiritual Sacrifices of Prayer and Praise, for them, and with them.

3. A King, to rule, command, and govern for Christ in his own Family: Gen. 18. 19. *I know Abraham, that he will command his Children, and his Household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, &c.* The Master of a Family hath a greater Command and Authority over those in his own House, than any Minister hath. He is more with them, and hath his Eye more upon them; he should therefore improve his Power for God, like the good *Bishop* describ'd, 1 *Tim.* 3. 4. *ruling well, i. e. religiously, his own House, having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity.*

Now if we enquire, whence the Neglect of this so great and necessary a Duty proceeds, there are several Causes of it; as,

1. *Ignorance* in those that should teach and instruct others, and that should pray with them. Let all such presently apply themselves (with all Care and Seriousness) to learn the things that concern their Salvation, that they may discharge their Duties towards their Relations. It's their Duty to labour for Ability to pray, and for that Gift whereby (upon all occasions) they may, in an humble and fitting manner, express the Desires of their Hearts to the Lord; and in the mean time (till by seeking to God for his Spirit to enable them, and by a faithful Endeavour, they have attain'd to some measure of this Gift) they may use some good prescrib'd Form: only let them be exceeding watchful over their Hearts, for fear of that Formality and mere Lip-Service, which in such Cases we are more especially in danger of.

Read Bp Wilkins's Help to Prayer.

2. *Carelessness*, is another Cause why this Duty is so much neglected; thinking that unnecessary, which is the one thing needful, it tending so much to the glorifying of God, and the Salvation of their own and others Souls that are under their Charge. They will provide Portions for their Children, and will see that their Servants do their Work; but for Religion (the one thing absolutely necessary) they are not much concern'd about it.

3. *Worldly-*

3. *Worldly-mindedness*, not affording them time for God's Worship and Service; not a Swine about the House but shall be served Morning and Evening, but God is not regarded.

4. *Profaneness* is sometimes the Cause of it; and how sad a Sight is this, when the Master of a Family, from such a Root and Spring as that, dares to deride the Duty, and scoff at those that make Conscience of it? They (*thro the Pride of their Hearts*) will not seek after God, and think it a Disparagement to them, to set up his Worship and Service in their Houses, as if the Great God should be a shame to his Creatures. Who are they, or what is their Father's House, that they are too good to be the Servants of the Most High? Let such wretched Worms consider seriously, and remember that awful Scripture, Mark 8. ult. *Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me, and of my Words, &c. of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.*

5. *Loose Opinions* may be another Cause, under pretence of new Light, setting People at liberty from the Observation and Practice of those Duties, whereby the Life and Power of Religion is most maintain'd and preserv'd.

Let Governors of Families beware therefore of these things, and whatever may hinder them from a conscionable Discharge of their Duties.

C H A P. XXX.

Of the Duties of Husband and Wife.

THE Duties owing to each other, in this Relation, are,

I. *Love*. There ought to be a firm and inviolable Love between them, grounded on God's Ordinance, and their own Covenant, and not merely on natural or civil Respects. And being so nearly united and made one Flesh, they should have but one Heart, they should have the greatest Kindness and Tenderness for each other imaginable.

Of the Duties of Husband and Wife. 587

ginable. Love in the one, will stir up Love in the other. If one be passionate at any time, let the other be patient; they must be careful not to be angry both together. If any Unkindness happen at any time to arise between them, they should never sleep in Displeasure, but both readily agree to a speedy Reconciliation; *the Sun should not go down on their Wrath.* Love must sweeten all their Speeches, Carriage, and Actions towards each other: Love will make all the Duties of a married Life easy, and all the Cumbers and Crosses of it tolerable; this for measure must exceed and surpass their Love to any other Creature. There must be between them, both the Love of Good-will, desiring heartily the Welfare of each other; and the Love of Complacency, delighting in each other: want of Love between Man and Wife is no small Sin.

II. Faithfulness.

1. That of the Bed, so as not only to keep themselves pure and chaste from all strange Embraces, but with the greatest Abhorrence detest any Motion or Temptation that way, *Prov. 5. 20.* they must be constant to, and confident of each other; Jealousy is the Bane of Love.

2. They must keep each other's Secrets. They should,

3. Conceal each other's Infirmities. Nothing more alienates the Minds of each from other, than thinking too much of each other's Imperfections; which as they should keep as much as is possible from the Knowledge and Observation of others, so also from their own Thoughts. The best way to live comfortably, is for Husband and Wife to look upon their own Faults, but upon the Vertues and Perfections of their Consorts: the first of these may be a means to breed Humility and Patience, the other to maintain Love.

4. They must be faithful to each other in managing their worldly Affairs.

5. If any Difference arise, they must not suffer it to take vent; for Jars conceal'd are half reconcil'd: whereas when once divulg'd, it's needful not only to make up the Breach, but to endeavour to silence such as may make Reflections abroad.

III. Helpfulness. They are to be mutual Helpers each to other, both in spiritual and temporal things.

1. They

588 *Of the Duties of Husband and Wife.*

1. They should endeavour to help one another Heavenwards, to promote and increase Holiness in one another's Souls, designing to meet together and live together in Heaven, never to part again. They should pray together, and for each other, 1 *Pet.* 3. 7. and should faithfully, wisely, and lovingly admonish one another in any Failings they discern in each other. This is the truest and most valuable Love; nay, indeed, how can it be said they love at all, if they can contentedly let each other run on in a sinful Course, that will bring to eternal Misery? True Love is Soul-Love; and if the Love of Husband and Wife be thus grounded in Religion and Piety, and a Care of each other's Souls, it will make their Lives a kind of Heaven upon Earth; it may prevent those Contentions, Heart-burnings and Brawls that are so fatal to many Families. They will, like *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, labour to *walk before the Lord blameless*; they will endeavour to plant Religion, and to propagate and credit it in their Family, and to be Examples of Prudence, Piety, and Goodness, to those among whom they live.

2. They are to be mutual Helpers to each other in natural and civil Respects; they are to comfort and cherish one another, both in Health and Sickness, in Prosperity and Adversity; to advise and assist each other in a right governing their Family, and in a prudent managing their Estate and worldly Affairs: and, in a word, to endeavour to make their Passage thro this World as comfortable to each other as they can.

In the next place is to be consider'd more particularly the Duties belonging to each of them severally; and, First, of the Duties of the Husband.

1. *Love* is the first Duty the Husband owes to his Wife, which, in the Man especially, must include Estimation. When the Wife sees she is a Person priz'd and highly valu'd by her Husband, and his Delight, she will delight to do that which may please him. His Love to her will be far from lessening or abasing that hearty and seemly Respect which is due to him: and how great the Love of the Husband should be, the Apostle intimates by the Similitudes he uses; the one, of that Christ bears to his Church, *Eph.* 5. 25. the other, of that a Man bears

to himself, *ver. 31.* Now every one knows and feels how he loves himself; it hath these Properties:

1. It's *cordial*, without Dissimulation. No-body is insincere and false in his Love to himself, so ought the Husband to love his Wife; as *Jonathan's Heart* was knit to *David*, 1 Sam. 18. 1. *He loved him as his own Soul.* Now the Apostle says, 1 Cor. 13. 5. *Charity is not easily provoked.* True, fervent, cordial Love is long-suffering, and beareth with many Infirmities and Weaknesses, and covereth a multitude of Offences; 1 Pet. 4. 8.

2. 'Tis *constant*; so natural to one's self, nothing can make it cease: tho by Sickness he become deform'd, of healthy he become sickly, tho he hath been patient and is now grown cholerick; yet he still loves himself: so no accidental Change or Defect should lessen a Man's Love to his Wife, who is his own *Flesh*.

3. It's very *tender*. How tenderly do we treat our selves when sick; if we have a sore Eye, how careful are we of it! So should the Affection of the Husband be to his Wife; expressing it self in a tender Regard of her, in Sickness and Health. The Man ought to look upon his Wife as the tenderer Part of himself, or, as the Apostle phraseth it, *as the weaker Vessel*, 1 Pet. 3. 7. which must not be a Cause of Contempt, but of greater Tenderness and Regard. And the more weak she is in respect of any Sickness or otherwise, so much the more tender care ought he to have of her: *No Man ever hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it*, Eph. 5. 29. The Husband therefore must not do any thing that may be hurtful or grievous to his Wife, no more than he would cut and gash his own Flesh. He is indeed to govern her, but he is to do it by wise, loving, amicable Counsel; and not by Harshness, Stripes, or any unnatural Cruelty. Let him be careful to manage that Authority and Superiority that God has given him over her, wisely, mildly, lovingly; and remember that all Authority over others is a Talent intrusted with us by God, for the Good of others, and not merely for the Pleasure of the Person so intrusted. *Love was never a Tyrant*: therefore all Harshness, Roughness, and such tyrannical Carriage is utterly unallowable.

4. It's *pure*; not for base and sinister Ends: he doth not love himself on account of his Health, Beauty, or Riches;

590 *Of the Duties of Husband and Wife.*

Riches ; but 'tis purely himself (because it is *himself*) that he loves. Such ought a Man's Love to his Wife to be, not because she is fair, or rich, or young ; but because she is his Wife. Tho he may perhaps see others healthier, handsomer, richer, wittier than himself ; yet surely he will not thereupon fall in love with them, and slight and neglect himself. So should his Love be to his Wife, purely for this reason, because she is his Wife. And tho he is not bound to think she excels all others in the World, yet he is to love her, like her, delight in her more than any other Woman in the world.

II. The next is *Instruction*. The Husband is to instruct the Wife in the things that concern her everlasting Welfare, if she be ignorant of them ; 1 Cor. 14. 35. This should make Men careful to get Knowledge themselves, that so they may perform this Duty to others.

III. *Maintenance*. He is to maintain her, provide for her, and allow her things convenient and fit, according to his Estate, and to let her partake with him in those outward good things wherewith God hath blessed him ; and as he is not by Niggardise to deny her what is fit for her, so neither must he by any Unthriftness waste his Estate or Income, so as to make himself unable to support her. And if God take him away before her, he is to provide for her comfortable Subsistence, according to his Ability.

I come now to speak of the Duties of the Wife. The Wife owes her Husband,

I. *Subjection* ; Eph. 5. 22. Col. 3. 18. 1 Pet. 3. 1. Besides these Scripture-Commands, there are several Reasons for it.

1. From the Creation.

(1.) The Man was first created, 1 Tim. 2. 13.

(2.) The Woman was made of the Man, and not the Man of the Woman ; 1 Cor. 11. 8.

(3.) The Woman was made for the Man, not the Man for the Woman ; Gen. 2. 18.

(4.) Nature it self proclaims it in respect of the Sex, the Female being inferiour to the Male ; 1 Cor. 11. 7.

2. From the Transgression. For tho the Woman was the latter in Creation, yet she was the former in the Transgression ; Gen. 3. 6, 12. 1 Tim. 2. 14.

3. From

Of the Duties of Husband and Wife. 591

3. From the Titles of *Head* and *Guide* given to the Husband in the Scriptures, which declare him to be superiour; 1 Cor. 11. 3. Eph. 5. 23. Prov. 2. 17.

II. The second Duty the Wife owes the Husband, is *Reverence*, Eph. 5. 33. Reverence is a Mixture of Love and Fear.

1. The Wife must intirely love her Husband, Tit. 2. 4. and desire to *do him good, and not hurt, all the days of her Life*, Prov. 31. 12. Love must sweeten her whole Carriage and Behaviour towards him; and this Love must proceed from a due Estimation of him, as her Head and Guide. Judgment is the Source and Spring of Affection; what the Mind esteems not, the Heart affects not; that which we highly prize, we dearly value: And if the Wife truly esteems her Husband, her Carriage and Behaviour towards him will be with all Sweetness, Amiability, and due Respect and Regard.

2. She ought to fear, not with a servile and slavish, but with a free ingenuous Fear (like that which a sincere Christian bears to God, springing from Love, and join'd with Love) lest she should give him any just occasion of Displeasure and Discontent: 1 Cor. 7. 34.

III. *Obedience*; 1 Cor. 14. 34. The Apostle says, *Women are commanded to be under Obedience, as also saith the Law. What Law? why Gen. 3. 16. Thy Desire shall be to thy Husband, and he shall rule over thee. Also Tit. 2. 5. Wives are commanded to be discreet, chaste, Keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphem'd. And in 1 Pet. 3. 6. Sarah is propounded as their Pattern; Even as Sarah obey'd Abraham, calling him Lord. What kind of Obedience this must be which the Wife is to render to the Husband, the Apostle acquaints us, Col. 3. 18.—As it is fit in the Lord.*

1. It must be done in *obedience* to God, to his Command and Ordinance. It must be a religious conscientious Submission; not only for Credit, or Peace-sake, or from Principles of natural Honesty only, but out of Conscience to God's Command, a Desire to please him, and to approve her Heart to him, as unto the Lord; Eph. 5. 22. that is, having a respect to the Precept and Command of Christ. This may take away that common Objection of some, If my Husband do not his Duty to me,

592 *Of the Duties of Husband and Wife.*

me, why should I do mine to him? His Faultiness and Neglect of his Duty will not excuse the Non-performance of yours: for it is owing principally to the Lord (who requires it of you) whether your Husband do his or no. And farther, the worse the Husband is, there's the more need for the Wife to carry her self with such Gentleness and Sweetness towards him, as may be most like to win him; for so the *Apostle* advises, *1 Pet. 3. 1.*

The discreet, kind, and loving Behaviour of the Wife towards her Husband (tho a *bad* Man) may be a great means to reclaim him; whereas the ill fruits of the Wife's Unquietness are very evident. How many, to avoid that, have fallen to Company-keeping, and by that to Drunkenness, Poverty, and a multitude of Mischiefers? Let all Wives therefore be careful not to administer such a Temptation.

2. It must be *in the Lord*; that is, in all lawful Commands. It must not extend to any thing that is against God: for otherwise, 'tis here as in the case of other Superiours, God must be obey'd rather than Man. If the Husband require a thing (tho not unlawful, yet) very inconvenient and imprudent, let the Wife calmly and mildly shew him the Inconveniencies thereof, and persuade him to the contrary: but if she cannot win him by fair Intreaties, let her not finally refuse to obey; nothing but the Unlawfulness of the Command, being a sufficient Warrant for that.

Further, she must manifest her Obedience in two things:

(1.) In being willing to be admonish'd of her Husband, in case of any Failing; not returning a peevish Answer again, but readily reforming what is amiss.

(2.) In being willing to be advis'd by him: not but that she may advise him in some Cases, and on some Occasions; for what a Servant may do, much more may a Wife do, as we find, *2 Kings 5. 3. 1 Sam. 16. 15, 16.* But this must be done with Wisdom and Discretion; the Admonition must be given seasonably, as to the Time, and with that Softness and Mildness, that it may appear 'tis Love, and not Anger, that it proceeds from.

3. She is to be a *meet Helper* to him, both in spiritual and temporal Concernments.

(1.) In

Of the Duties of Parents and Children. 593

(1.) In the managing of domestical Affairs, the House being her proper Sphere; *Tit. 2. 5.* They should have a vigilant and watchful Eye over the Affairs of the Family: they must *guide the House*, as 'tis written, *1 Tim. 5. 14. Every wise Woman (Solomon says, Prov. 14. 1.) buildeth her House, &c.* And *Prov. 31. 27. She looketh well to the Ways of her Household, and eateth not the Bread of Idleness.*

(2.) She must bear a part in all the Crosses and Troubles that the Providence of God shall bring upon them.

(3.) She must be a Cheerer and Comforter of him both in Health and Sickness, a meet Helper to him in both; and avoid carefully, wisely, and faithfully whatsoever might prove a Temptation to him, or a Means of drawing him off from God and his Ways. Certainly there is no outward Condition in this World so comfortable as the marry'd, when things are carry'd between Man and Wife with Piety, Wisdom, and Love; and when, as *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, they are found walking blameless together in the way of their Duty.

C H A P. XXXI.

Of the Duties of Parents and Children.

THE Duties belonging to *Parents*, are these:

I. To dedicate their Children to Christ in their Infancy, and by Baptism to enter them into his Family. This, Parents ought not to delay, it being most reasonable that they who have been Instruments to convey the Stain and Pollution of Sin to their poor Infants, should be careful early to bring them to Christ, to receive the Benefits of his Death and gracious Undertaking on their behalf. They need a Saviour, and are capable of Grace, of the Principle of a new Life, of the Spirit of Christ, and being blessed by him; capable of receiving a Sacrament, *viz. Baptism*, now instituted under the Gospel, and of being admitted Members of the Christian Church; as well as the Infants of the *Jews*, who were *circumcised*, and admitted thereby visible Members of that Church, and seal'd and mark'd as it were for God, by that Sacra-

594 Of the Duties of Parents and Children.

ment of Circumcision. And it is evident the Covenant of Grace is not made narrower or more confin'd, but stands now in force to the Children of Believers under the Gospel; Acts 2. 39. *The Promise is to you and to your Children.* Were it not so, the converted Jews should have loss by believing in Christ, if their Children should be excluded from the Promise, who stood in it two thousand Years before, under the other Administration. And how then could the Blessing of Abraham come on the Gentiles? according to Gal. 3. 14. which was, *I will be a God to thee and to thy Seed,* Gen. 17. 7. How could Believers be *Heirs* according to the Promise, if the Children be excluded from it? For the Childrens Right to the Promise is part of the Fathers Inheritance, the Promise to them being this, *I will be a God to them and to their Seed.* Consider also how the Covenant of Grace, (for Substance, tho not for Manner of Administration) hath always been one and the same. And in the Old Testament it took in Children, and can we think it leaves them out now under the Gospel? And the Children of believing Christian Parents being within the Covenant, certainly they ought to partake of the Seal of the Covenant. And when they come to riper Years, they are to ratify and confirm their Engagement, and the Obligation their Parents, on their behalf, laid them under in their Baptism. If they will own that Master, and faithfully serve him into whose Family they were list'd when young, they may enjoy many sweet and comfortable Privileges thereby; but if not, they shall be sure to smart for their falling off and Apostacy. But of this, see it more largely treated of, in the First Part (of the Baptismal Vow). Christian Parents should thus early bring their Children to Christ, by Baptism enter and enroll them into his Family, humbly beseeching him to receive them into his Favour and Love, into his Care and Protection; to unite them to himself by his Holy Spirit, and to renew them after his own Image; and to strengthen them by his Grace, that they may resist and prevail against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and may serve the Lord in Newness of Life all their days. Those therefore that wilfully neglect this Ordinance, do as much as in them lies withhold their Children from Christ, and dangerously expose them to the Adversary of their Souls.

II. The next Duty of Parents, is to teach and instruct their Children, as soon as they are capable, and to bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord, Eph. 6. 4. Having given them up to Christ in Baptism, let them imagine they hear our blessed Saviour saying to them, as Pharaoh's Daughter said to Moses's Mother, Exod. 2. 9. Bring up this Child for me, &c. They must train them up in the way that they should go; and, as soon as capable, be instructed in those things that concern their everlasting Welfare. They are by little and little to be taught all those things which God hath commanded them as their Duty to perform: they are to be acquainted with the Covenant they are under in their Baptism, and their great Privileges thereby, if they continue faithful to it; what glorious Rewards God hath provided for his Children and faithful Servants, and what grievous Punishments will be inflicted on the perfidious Violators of it. The Seeds and Principles of Religion being sown in them betimes; and their Minds possess'd with a Love of Goodness, and an Abhorrence of Sin and Wickedness; it may be hoped will, like new Vessels, keep the Savour of that which is first put into them. But if they be not thus early acquainted with the Ways of God, the Devil (that arch Enemy of Souls) will be ready enough to instil wicked Principles, and to blow up the Corruption of their Natures, and hurry them on in the Ways that lead down to endless Perdition. And what a sad Account will those Parents have to give, who have neglected their Duty herein?

III. Another Duty of Parents, is to bless their Children: and that,

1. By their Prayers. They should by daily and earnest Prayers commend them to the Favour and Blessing of the Lord, craving all needful Mercies for them, both temporal and spiritual. Children of many Prayers seldom miscarry.

2. By labouring to be such Persons themselves (so truly religious) that a Blessing may descend from them on their Posterity. This is frequently promis'd to godly Men, *That their Seed shall be blessed*, Prov. 20. 7.

IV. They ought to set them a good Example, else all their Precepts and Counsels will do no good. And how many Parents, by their wicked Conversation, corrupt and deprave their own Children? This Consideration alone,

596 Of the Duties of Parents and Children.

if duly weigh'd, lays a most strict Tye and Obligation upon all Parents to lead an holy and religious Life; else they not only hazard their own Souls, but endanger their Childrens also: and what an inhuman Cruelty is that?

V. They must watch over them, and by a prudent Discipline govern them, and guard their Education.

1. Encouraging them when they do well, and winning them by Love, and a fair and kind Carriage, that they may delight to do their Duties. They must not by too much Austerity and Harshness (as some Parents do) and by a rigorous Use of their parental Authority, provoke and exasperate their Children, so as to dread coming into their Presence, and have no hearts to study to please them, seeing they will afford them no countenance. This is contrary to what the Apostle prescribes, *Col. 3. 21. Fathers, provoke not your Children to Anger, lest they be discouraged.*

2. If fair Means, Persuasions, and Encouragements will not prevail, then another Course must be taken: sober, yet sharp Reproof must be used: if that fail too, then Correction becomes necessary: for in this case, as *Solomon* says, *He that spareth his Rod, hateth his Son; but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes;* *Prov. 13. 24.* 'Tis a cruel and foolish Fondness to spare Stripes, when all other Means have been unsuccessful. Therefore this Correction should be,

(1.) Timely, before Children have been suffer'd to run on so long, that they have got a Habit to Evil, and contracted a Stubbornness of Will.

(2.) Moderate, not exceeding the Quality of the Fault, nor the Tenderness of the Child.

(3.) Not inflicted in Anger, that he may not think the Punishment proceeds from that; but he must be made sensible of his Fault, shew'd the Evil and Danger of it, and directed how to amend it: which is (with the Lord's Blessing) the means of reforming him.

VI. They must maintain them, and allow them a Competency (according to their Estates) for their comfortable Subsistence. The contrary hereto, such a covetous Humour that they cannot abide to part with any thing almost as long as they live, has a Tendency,

1. To lessen their Childrens Affection towards them.

2. To put them upon shifting and sharking ways, to maintain themselves, and to hinder the right Use of their Estates when they come to the Possession and Enjoyment of them.

3. Hereby

Of the Duties of Parents and Children. 597

3. Hereby the Parents lose that Contentment which they might have, in seeing their Children live prosperously and comfortably, when they have a Competency to live on; which none but a covetous Earthworm would exchange for that mean Pleasure they can take in hoarding up abundance of Money in their Chest.

VII. It is their Duty to provide some good and honest Profession, or some suitable and fit way of Employment for them, that they may be serviceable in their Generation, and avoid Idleness, that great Snare of the Devil.

VIII. They must lay up and provide for them, as God shall give them means and opportunity: 2 Cor. 12. 14. *The Children ought not to lay up for the Parents, but the Parents for the Children.* But let them satisfy themselves to make such provision for their Children as God shall enable them honestly to make, lest by Injustice in getting it, a Curse should go along with it. Prov. 16. 8. A little honestly got, is better than great Riches gotten unjustly and unrighteously.

IX. They must command them only lawful and reasonable things, using their Power and Authority over them only with Equity and Moderation, and with a gentle hand. In all things of moment they require of them, let them consider the real Good and Benefit of their Children, and guide themselves by that, and not merely their own Advantage, or Pleasure, or the Exercise of their own Authority. This is a Rule whereof Parents may often have use, and especially in the Business of marrying their Children; that they may not force them to marry against their Inclinations, and where they cannot love: by which grievous Tyranny, some have betray'd their Children to innumerable Mischiefs, such as were irreparable. In this case of disposing of Children in Marriage, they ought especially to consider, and take care,

1. That they may live *christianly*; and to that purpose, to chuse a pious, vertuous, and gracious Person to link them with, that may not be in danger of hindering, but of furthering them in the way to Heaven: this ought above all other things to be regarded.

2. That they may live *comfortably* and *cheerfully* in the World; and to that end, Abundance is not absolutely needful, and therefore should not be too vehemently, and never in the first place and principally sought

598 *Of the Duties of Parents and Children.*

sought after: tho' in some Cases, and according to the Circumstances of Estates, and of Persons possessing of them, the Rules of Prudence and Justice to themselves and Families may make such a Proportion requisite and needful to some more than to others. But the mutual Kindness and Liking of the Parties is of so great moment, that no Parent ought to force a Child, on that account, into this Relation.

Next follows the Duties of *Children* towards their *Parents*, and these are :

I. *Reverence* ; which they must express,

1. By honouring them in their Hearts ; bearing not only an Awe and Respect, but a Kindness and Affection towards them ; loving their Persons, fearing to do any thing that may justly provoke them, and highly esteeming them as the Instruments under God of their Being. *Lev. 19. 3.* The Mother there is placed first, probably because Children, when grown up, do many times undutifully and wickedly neglect and despise them. But how cursed a thing this is, to set light by Parents, and in our secretest Thoughts to despise them, God himself declares, *Deut. 27. 16.* *Cursed be he that setteth light by his Father or his Mother, and all the People shall say, Amen.*

2. By speaking to them with due Respect and Regard, and to others of them. What a heinous Sin then is mocking Parents ? *Prov. 30. 17.* it's said, *The Eye that mocketh his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, the Ravens of the Valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it.* But the most horrid Sin of cursing Parents, which some have been guilty of, is to be punish'd with *Death*, *Exod. 21. 17.* And to this Head may be refer'd, that great and high Offence that those wretched Children are guilty of, who wish for their Parents Death : but this is so exceedingly dangerous and wicked, that they who so eagerly desire the Death of their Parents, take the direct Course (untimely) to meet with their own ; for if long Life be promis'd as a Reward of honouring Parents, 'tis very agreeable to Divine Justice, that untimely Death should be the Punishment of the contrary.

3. By giving them in their outward Carriage all due Respect and Observance, behaving themselves with Humility

military towards them, and giving them all those Signs and Expressions of Civil Honour, which are due to them. The unnatural and most detestable Sin of smiting Parents, is by the Divine Law to be punish'd with Death; and we find by the Punishment which the Heathen inflicted for this Crime, that the very Light of Nature in them abhor'd such unnatural and monstrous Undutifulness.

II. Obedience: which must be manifested,

1. By hearkening to their Instructions; carefully laying up their Precepts in their Hearts, especially such as concern the Welfare of their Souls. But there is too often such a Pride and Headiness in Youth, that they are apt to slight the Counsels and Directions of their Elders, looking upon them as proceeding from too much Severity, or from Dotage; when they are indeed the Fruits of Wisdom, Sobriety, and Experience. And accordingly they are counsel'd by Solomon (who was the wisest of mere Men, and that Counsel indicted by the Spirit of God) Prov. 23. 22. *Hearken to thy Father that begat thee, and despise not thy Mother when she is old.*

2. By obeying their lawful Commands; most gladly and cheerfully doing those things, that may bring Joy and Comfort to them, and carefully avoiding what they apprehend will grieve or afflict them: and that out of Conscience and Obedience to God, who enjoins it; and not merely from some outward Advantages or Benefits to themselves, as too many do. This is not only contain'd in the fifth Commandment, but expressly enjoin'd in other places of Scripture; as Col. 3. 20. Eph. 6. 1. Tho it must be in all things, yet it is to be only in the Lord; if their Commands are not contrary to God's: for in that case, our Duty to God must be prefer'd before our Obedience to our Parents. But in such a case let them do it in such a modest and respectful manner, that it may appear that it is Conscience, and not Stubbornness, that moves them to refuse Obedience.

3. In bearing patiently their Reproofs, and submitting to their Corrections, and reforming thereupon what is amiss: Prov. 29. 17. Heb. 12. 9. Prov. 13. 1.

4. In forbearing to do any thing of moment, without craving their Advice and Counsel; especially in the Business of Marriage. For Children are so much the Goods

600 Of the Duties of Parents and Children

and Possession of their Parents, that they cannot justly give away themselves without their allowance, that have so great a Right in them. Under the Law; *Numb. 30. 5.* the Right of the Parent was thought of force enough to cancel and make void the Obligation even of a Vow; if unadvisedly made, and without his consent.

III. *Gratitude and Thankfulness is the Duty of Children* to their Parents: which they must express,

1. In a hearty affectionate Acknowledgment of their Love and Care over them. If they duly consider them not only as Instruments, under God, of bringing them into the World, but of sustaining and supporting them after; and do farther consider the Cares and Fears, that go to the bringing up a Child; they will judge that Thankfulness is but a moderate Return for so great Benefits.

2. In ministering to their Necessities; of what kind soever, as they are able; whether in Weakness or Sickness of Body, Decayedness of Understanding, Poverty and Lowness of Estate. The Child is bound, according to his Ability, to relieve and help them; and thereby (as much as in him lies) to recompence their Care, Love, and Kindness towards him. As his Parent bore with him when a Child, so he must bear with his Parent, tho froward, and twice a Child: tho God should raise him in Dignity above him, yet that must not cancel his Duty towards him, nor make him ashamed to own him, as some wicked Children have been. But remember the Example of *Joseph*, *Gen. 47. 12.* and what the Apostle enjoins, *1 Tim. 5. 4.* And observe the Example of our Saviour himself, who when he left the World, commended his Mother to the Care of his beloved Disciple: *John 19. 26, 27.*

There is one thing more (which may be couch'd under this Head) wherein such Children, as are really good and truly religious themselves, may express a high degree of Gratitude, Love, and Duty to their Parents, if the Case so be (as it sometimes happens) that their Parents are yet unacquainted with, or negligent of the great Concerns of their Souls. Now in such a case as this, what a high Office of filial Duty is it, for a Child in a wise and humble manner to insinuate into his Parent such things as may (with the Blessing of God) tend to his everlasting Welfare; and so be an Instrument of his new Birth,

who

Of the Duties of Parents and Children. 601

who (under God) gave him his first Birth and Being in this World? This is a Duty wherein some Children should take themselves to be more concern'd, than usually they do.

3. In praying for them; the Debt which Children owe to their Parents being so great, as that they are not able to satisfy it themselves, they ought earnestly to beg of the Lord that he would please to recompense it, by multiplying his Graces in them, and his Blessings both spiritual and temporal upon them, and to requite their Care and Love a thousand fold into their Bosoms.

4. In covering their Infirmities. 'Tis the Duty, and will be the Endeavour of good and ingenious Children, to cover and conceal the Infirmities of their Parents (with Shem and Japhet) and not with cursed Cham to publish and disclose them; Gen. 9. 23. How detestable is it for Children to deride and scoff at their Infirmities?

5. By imitating their good Example: Whatever is good, veracious, and commendable in Parents, let Children imitate; but their Vices and Miscarriages let them decline, and not entail them on their Posterity. Let them remember what a dismal Sound is in those words; Jeroboam, the Son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin; 2 Kings 3. 3. Now to press Children to a careful Observation of these things, let them consider,

(1.) It is right and just, and that which should be, Eph. 6. 1. and it is well-pleasing unto the Lord, Col. 3. 20.

(2.) It hath a Promise of Reward; Eph. 6. 2, 3. Honour thy Father and Mother (which is the first Commandment with Promise) that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayst live long on the Earth. The Words in Exod. 20. 12. may be render'd, That they (by their Prayers)

may prolong thy Days. Parents Prayers are great Blessings to Children. And in Prov. 10. 27. it's said, The Fear of the Lord prolongeth Days: and Godliness hath the Promise of this Life, and of that which is to come, 1 Tim. 4. 8. If God take away some good and dutiful Children betimes out of this Life, they are still no Losers by it; for then God is better to them than his Promise, if instead of a long Life here on Earth, he gives them present Possession of an Inheritance of far better value in the Kingdom above: they are then exceedingly Gainers thereby.

C H A P. XXXII.

Of the Duties of Masters and Servants.

MAsters ought to be careful of these things:

I. To *instruct* their Servants, to inform them in the right Knowledge of God, in the things that concern their everlasting Welfare and Salvation: to catechize them, to pray with them, and for them; to bring them to the publick Ordinances, and cause them to observe faithfully the Lord's Day; to exhort them to private Prayer, and reading the Scriptures, and to be diligent and conscientious in their places, &c. *Gen. 18. 19.*

II. To give them a good *Example*. A wise Carriage and a pious, honest, and unblamable Conversation, does much tend to the bettering of Servants; but if the Master be loose and profane himself, it's unreasonable for such a one to expect a sober Family.

III. To command them only *just* and *lawful* things (things equal, as the *Apostle* speaks, *Col. 4. 1.*) and to require of them only such Service as they may well do, with moderate Care and Industry; and that which other Servants, of like Condition with them, usually perform. A Master must not overtask his Servants, nor oppress them with Labours, so that they shall have no time to bestow on their Souls; which is a ruling over them with Rigour, forbidden *Lev. 25. 43.*

IV. To allow them wholesome, fitting, and sufficient Food, convenient Rest, and moderate Refreshment, that they may do their Work with the more Chearfulness.

V. In time of Sicknes, to take care that such things as are necessary for their Recovery be not wanting to them; such as fitting Diet, Physick, and Attendance. A Master and Mistress are at such a time in the place of Parents: we read, *Mat. 8. 5, 6.* the *Centurion* went to Christ to heal his Servant.

VI. To encourage them in Well-doing, by using them with that Kindness and Bounty, which their Piety, Faithfulness, and Diligence deserves.

VII. To

Of the Duties of Masters and Servants 603

VII. To *admonish* and *reprove* them, when they do amiss; and that not only in Faults against themselves (wherein few Masters are backward) but also, and more especially in Faults against God; at which every Master ought to be more troubled and concern'd, than at those which tend only to his own Loss and Inconvenience. The Dishonour of God, or the Hazard of the meanest Person's Soul, is infinitely more worthy our Disquiet, than any thing of the other kind can be. Therefore when Masters or Mistresses are presently on fire for any little Negligence and Fault of a Servant towards themselves, and yet can without trouble see them run into great Sins and Miscarriages against God; it's a sign they consider their own Concernments too much, and God's Honour and their Servants Souls too little.

But as Masters are to *admonish* and *reprove* Servants in case of Fault, so they must also look to do it in a due manner, so as may be most likely to do good; not in Passion and Rage, which can never work the Servant to any thing, but the despising and hating of them. Their Rebukes must be just, sparing, moderate, *Eph. 6. 9. forbear bearing Threatning.* They must reprove in such a sober and grave manner, as may convince them of their Faults, and may plainly shew them that it is Love and Good-will to their Souls, and a Desire of their Amendment, that makes them thus reprove them. But if no Warnings nor Reproofs will restrain them from ill Courses, and that they will not be corrected by Words, as in *Prov. 29. 19.* then (in due Circumstances) it may probably be most expedient to dismiss them.

VIII. To listen to their just Grievances, and redress them; *Job 31. 13, 14. If I did despise the Cause of my Man-Servant, or my Maids-Servant, when they contended with me; what then shall I do when God visiteth me? &c.*

IX. To pay them their Wages, and justly to perform to them those Conditions on which they agreed. And as *Morries* hereto, let them consider, *1.* They have a Master in Heaven, who is Omniscient, Righteous, and Just, to whom they must give an account of the Usage of their meanest Servant on Earth: *Eph. 6. 9. And, ye Masters, do the same things to your Servants, &c.* Do the same things, that is, that which is good and right. It's to be understood not of the

Duties

604 *Of the Duties of Masters and Servants.*

Duties themselves (which are very different from the Duties of Servants) but as to the Manner of doing them, viz. *with Singleness of Heart as to the Lord*, and in obedience to his Will and Command. Be careful also to give due Recompence for their Service; for Good-will in serving, return Good-will by encouraging; if they be faithful, be you good and gentle; if they obey you in the Lord, do you command them in the Lord, only things just and equal, and that may be pleasing to God.

2. They and their Servants are of the same Mould, the same Earth as to the Body; and they have reasonable Souls, capable of Grace here, and Glory hereafter, as well as they. They should not therefore carry themselves imperiously, harshly, and churlishly to them.

3. Those Servants that are truly gracious, are God's Free-men, and so Fellow-Servants with their converted and believing Masters, in respect of God. They are Members of the same mystical Body, of which Christ is the Head; and may have a greater measure of Grace here, and a greater degree of Glory hereafter, than their Masters.

4. Let them consider how easily God could have set them in their Servants place, and their Servants in theirs: and therefore let them give them such Usage, as themselves would think fit and reasonable, had God dispos'd them into the same Condition.

The Duties that Servants owe to their Masters, are next to be consider'd. And these are,

I. All due *Reverence*.

1. In their *Hearts* honouring them, and fearing to give them any just Occasion of Distaste.

2. In their *Words*; speaking respectfully to them, and to others of them.

3. In their *Behaviour*; carrying themselves with due Regard and Respect towards them; remembering the Superiority, Power, and Authority they have over them:

1 Tim. 6. 1. *Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all Honour, &c.* See also Mal. 1. 6. *If I be a Master, where is my Fear, &c.* And 1 Pet. 2. 18. *Servants, be subject to your own Masters with all Fear, &c.* not with a slavish, but with a christian ingenuous Fear, which makes them careful not to neglect any

Of the Duties of Masters and Servants. 605

any Duty they are bound to perform, nor to offend or provoke, where they ought to please.

II. *Obedience*: which they ought to express,

1. In carefully minding and observing their Instructions and Counsels, especially those given them for the Good of their Souls.

2. In performing and executing their just and lawful Commands: this is expressly requir'd, Tit. 2. 9. *Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Masters, and to please them well in all things, &c.* And this Obedience must not be a grumbling unwilling one, but ready and cheerful; Eph. 6. 7. *With Good-will doing service.*

And to help them herein, they are to consider, it is to the Lord, and not only to Men; which may make them the more cheerful in it. Christian Servants should look beyond their Masters unto God, who hath plac'd them in that Condition, and enjoin'd them that Obedience: Col. 3. 23. they must do it heartily, as unto the Lord; that is, as before God, and in his sight, desiring to glorify God, and approve their Hearts unto him. Servants must not dispute their Masters lawful Commands, but cheerfully let themselves to do them, and that with an eye to God's Command. If they command any thing (tho lawful) yet evidently imprudent, let them humbly offer their Reasons to the contrary; but if they persist, let them not refuse finally to obey them.

3. In patiently and meekly submitting to their Reproofs, when they do amiss, not answering again, Tit. 2. 9. that is, not making such surly and rude Replies, as may provoke and increase their Masters Displeasure: a thing too frequent among Servants, even in the justest Reprehensions. Whereas the Apostle directs them to suffer patiently the most undeserv'd Correction, even when they do well, and yet suffer for it, 1 Pet. 2. 20. And farther, they must know, that the giving their Masters the hearing, and the patient suffering of Rebuke, is not sufficient; but they must speedily amend the Faults they are rebuk'd for, and set upon the reforming what hath been amiss.

III. *Faithfulness*: They must be true and faithful,

1. In their Words, speaking the Truth always. Lying doubles a Fault; *A lying Tongue is an Abomination to the Lord*, Prov. 6. 17. Rev. 21. 8. Lyars are of the number

of

606 Of the Duties of Masters and Servants.

of those that shall be shut out of Heaven, and ~~shall~~ have their part in the Lake that burns with Fire and Brimstone. When therefore they are charg'd with a Fault (if they be guilty) let them remember that an humble ingenuous Confession, with Promise of Amendment, is the best and most pacifying Excuse that they can possibly make.

2. In their Actions.

(1.) In not purloining, as the Apostle commands, *Tit. 2. 10.* not converting that which is their Master's to their own use, or disposing of any thing that is his, without his leave: contenting themselves with such things as are fit for a Servant to have, and not secretly filching such things as they know are not allow'd them by their Master, or appointed for them. Where the Fear of God is in the Heart, there will be a Care of these things.

(2.) In not wasting and embezzling their Masters Goods (as the unjust Steward, *Luke 16. 6.*) by their Neglect and Carelessness. Every Master is suppos'd to entrust his Affairs, as well to the Honesty as to the Care of his Servant; therefore the Unfaithfulness of a Servant is a Sin (in some respects) worse than common Theft, there being a greater Trust repos'd, the betraying whereof adds to the Crime.

(3.) They must be faithful in their Work and Business, and in the managing of all things entrusted to them; labouring to preserve and increase their Master's Estate, by all good and lawful means; *showing all good Fidelity, Tit. 2. 10.* and *Col. 3. 22.* In Singleness of Heart, fearing God. The Fear of God in the Heart will make them faithful. Such a Servant was *Eleazer*, that wise, faithful, praying Servant, of whom we read, *Gen. 24.* and such honest upright Servants were *Jacob* and *Joseph*, who were great Blessings to the Masters whom they serv'd.

(4.) They must be faithful in respect of their Masters Children (and more especially, if any particular Care of them be committed to them) endeavouring their Good and Welfare in every kind and way; being helpful to infuse good Principles into them, and the Seeds of Piety and Religion according to their Capacity; and abhorring to speak or do any thing before them, that may encourage Sin, or any way tend to corrupt and deprave them. They must not conceal their Faults and Miscarriages,

and

Of the Duties of Masters and Servants. 607

and much less be necessary to draw them into them, or be any way instrumental to their Ruin.

(5.) They must do all the good they can to their Fellow-Servants, by prudent Suggestions and Admonition, as they are able; and by a good Example, and an unblamable Conversation.

(6.) They must preserve (by all good means) the Reputation of their Master and his Family; and not, like idle Tale-bearers, divulge every thing done in the House: which is an Unfaithfulness an honest Servant should abhor.

IV. Diligence: constantly attending to all those things that are the Duties of their Place, and not giving themselves to Idleness and Sloth; remembering their Time is their Masters, and therefore not to be squander'd away or mispent. They must do all true Service to their Masters, not only when their Eye is over them, but when they are absent, and not likely to discern their Fallings therein; *not with Eyeservice*, Eph. 6. 6. Good Servants, when their Master's Eye is not upon them, see him that is invisible, and that always beholds them, and desire to perform the Duties of their Places carefully and conscientiously; not only to escape their Master's, but God's Anger, who will call them to an account.

The Motives to encourage Servants to a cheerful Performance of their Duties in this manner, are,

1. That hereby they will adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour, Tit. 2. 10. The World will then see that true Religion is not merely a Name, but a powerful thing, rendering Men good in all their Relations. It will render Religion amiable to the World.

2. They shall not lose their Reward from God, if out of conscience to his Command, they are obedient and faithful to them: Eph. 6. 8. *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.* Col. 3. 24. *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the Reward of the Inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

C H A P. XXXIII.

Of the Duties of such as are in Office, and of Inferiours.

ALL those that are in any Office or Place of publick Trust, ought to be very careful to discharge the Duties of their respective Places, faithfully, diligently, and patiently, with an upright Heart, and a right temper'd Zeal; aiming at the Glory of God, and endeavouring that Piety, Justice, and Peace, may be preserv'd and maintain'd among those, over whom they have any Power or Authority given them. Let such read and consider well these following Scriptures; *Exod. 18. 21. 2 Sam. 23. 3.*—*He that ruleth over Men, must be just, ruling in the Fear of God.* *Rom. 12. 8.*—*He that ruleth, must do it with Diligence.* Let them also see, and consider well, *Rom. 13. 3, 4.* *For Rulers are not a Terror to good Works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the Power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the Minister of God to thee for Good, &c.* And see *1 Sam. 2. 30.* *They that honour me, I will honour; but they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.*

The Duties of Inferiours follow:

Inferiours ought to yield all due Subjection to those Magistrates and Governours whom God hath set over them; remembering that Magistracy is God's Ordinance, and none can reasonably think that Religion, by any means, freeth them from Subjection thereunto. They are to consider how sharply the Apostle, in *2 Pet. 2. 10.* reproves those that despise Government, that are presumptuous, self-willed, that are not afraid to speak evil of Dignities. Subjection is a hard Duty indeed to corrupt Nature; *Man naturally is like the wild Ass's Colt*, as *Zophar* speaks, *Job 11. 12.* in respect both of the Rudeness of his Mind, and the Untamedness of his Affections. Corrupt Nature would fain be free and yokeless; thro Pride, it loves not the Superiority of others; and being licentious, loves not to be restrain'd by them: he would have

have none to be Lord over him, as *Psal. 12. 3.* He would neither have his Heart subject to God, nor his Actions to Man. But this their way is their Folly: *For Rulers are not* (so far as they keep to the divine Order and Appointment) *a Terror to good Works, but to the evil; and they are the Ministers of God for Good,* if they faithfully discharge the Duties of their Place in which God hath by his Providence set them. The despising therefore of their just and lawful Commands, is directly against the Injunctions of the Divine Law; which has commanded, *Rom. 13. 1. Let every Soul be subject unto the higher Powers, for there is no Power but of God; the Powers that be, are ordain'd of God.* *Titus 3. 1. Put them in mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magistrates, to be ready to every good Work.* This is the plain and express Command of God, when what they enjoin is agreeable to his Word; otherwise, our Duty is to obey God rather than Man. But where the Command is according to the Rule of God's Word, and in no respect repugnant thereto; there we are to obey not only for Fear, but also for Conscience-sake: and to refuse such a Subjection to the lawful and just Commands of the Magistrate, is an Act of Disobedience to God, whose Vicegerent he is, and a Trespas against the common Good of human Societies. Let all Inferiours therefore, in obedience to God, for the honour of true Religion, and for the preserving of Order and good Government in the World, make conscience of putting in practice constantly these following Duties; viz.

1. To pray for Magistrates, and such as are in Authority over them; *1 Tim. 2. 1, 2.*
2. To honour their Persons; *Rom. 13. 7. Exod. 22. 28. Jude ver. 8. Acts 23. 5.*
3. To yield all due Subjection and Obedience to them; *1 Pet. 2. 13, 14.*

C H A P. XXXIV.

Of the Duties of People towards their Ministers.

HAVING spoken of the Duties of Children to their natural Parents, and of all Inferiours to Magistrates, their Civil Parents, and such as are set in Authority over them; I come now to speak of the Duties of People to their Ministers, their spiritual Parents. Thus St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 4. 15. *That in Christ Jesus he had begotten them through the Gospel.* And the *Galatians*, Chap. 4. 19. *That he travel'd in Birth again of them, till Christ be form'd in them.*

Their Duties to them therefore are these:

I. To esteem them very highly in Love for their Work's sake, as the Apostle commands, 1 Thess. 5. 13. Which surely will seem very reasonable, if we consider either,

1. The Nature of their Work: It is of all other the most excellent; there can be no Calling or Employment more honourable, than the rescuing of precious Souls out of the hands of Satan, and from endless Destruction: *Psal.* 50. 16, 17.

2. It is a great and difficult Work. They are,

(1.) To instruct the People under their Charge, to feed them with Knowledge and Understanding, *Jer.* 3. 15. and to teach them the way of Salvation; *Hos.* 4. 6. *Mal.* 2. 7. *Isa.* 30. 20. *Col.* 1. 28.

(2.) To pray for them; to be the Lord's Remembrancers, and their Sollicitors in the Court of Heaven.

(3.) To be an Example to them, in a holy and unblamable Life and Conversation; 1 Thess. 2. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 3.

(4.) To visit the Sick; *Mal.* 2. 7.

(5.) To labour to settle the Distressed in Conscience; 1 Thess. 2. 11.

(6.) To watch over the Flock, to preserve them,
1. From corrupt Doctrine. 2. From a corrupt Conversation. And to this end to endeavour the reclaiming the Disorderly by Admonitions, and such other Censures as Christ hath left in the Church: *Heb.* 13. 17.

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Their Work therefore is such as ought in all reason to procure them Love and Esteem, it being (where it is faithfully discharg'd) of so great advantage to the World. *Joseph's* Office, in delivering out Corn in the time of Famine, made him justly honour'd by the *Egyptians*; how worthy an Employment is it then to deliver out the Manna of God's Word, the Food of Life to the Souls of Men, who without it are in danger to perish everlastingly?

II. Consider who it is that employs them: *They are Ambassadors for Christ*, 2 Cor. 5. 20. Ambassadors by the Law of Nations are to be treated with a Respect answerable to the Quality of those that send them. Therefore Christ tells his Disciples, when he sends them out to preach, *He that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me*; Luke 10. 16. It is, we see, much worse than People ordinarily consider, to despise such as are the faithful Ministers of Christ. Let those consider this, who make it their Design and Sport to put Affronts upon the Persons, and to deride the Calling of Ministers. Certainly there will be a strict Account requir'd of all the Derisions, Slanders, Reproaches, and hard Usage the faithful Ministers of Christ meet with in the Discharge of their Places and Calling, whether under the Denomination of *Conformists* or *Non-Conformists*, that are so derided and persecuted by them. And it being Christ himself that sends them out, commissions, and employs them, let none presume to exercise the Office of this sacred Function, without being lawfully call'd thereto, being duly fitted and qualify'd for that great Work: Heb. 5. 4. *No Man taketh this Honour to himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron*.

2. They ought to pray for their Ministers, *Heb. 13. 18*, 19. that they may be furnish'd with all those Graces and Gifts, and blessed with such Assistances of God's Spirit, as may enable them to discharge that holy Calling faithfully and successfully.

3. They ought conscientiously to attend upon their Ministry, and submit to their spiritual Guidance and Direction, trying it by the Rule of God's Word, as the *Bereans*, Acts 17. 11. and really endeavouring to grow in Grace and Knowledg thereby. *Obey them*, saith the Apostle, Heb. 13. 17. *that have the Rule over you, and*

612 Of the Duties of People to their Ministers.

Submit your selves, for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with Joy, and not with Grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Whatsoever they out of God's Word shall make manifest to be his Will and Command, is to be obey'd, seeing it is not they, but God that requires it; according to that of Christ, *He that heareth you, heareth me,* Luke 10. 16. And this, whether it be deliver'd by way of publick Preaching, or of private Exhortation; for in both, so long as they keep to the Rule, which is God's Word, they are the *Messengers of the Lord of Hosts,* Mal. 2. 7. People therefore must labour to grow in spiritual Knowledge and Grace, answerably to the Means of Grace afforded to them; and thereby strengthen the Hands, and encourage the Heart of their Minister in his Work. The Proficiency of the People in Knowledge and Holiness, is the Crown and Rejoicing of every faithful Minister; and tho God will not reward him only according to his Success, but according to his Sincerity and Industry, yet it must needs be grievous to him, to see his multiply'd Pains and Labours amongst them not answer'd with desired Success. Let People therefore look to it, that they bring forth the Fruits of the Gospel that is preach'd to them. The Husbandman sows his Ground fallow, when he sees it will not bring forth Corn: *The Kingdom of Heaven, that is, Gospel-Privileges (says our Saviour) shall be taken away from you, and given to others that will bring forth the Fruits thereof;* Mat. 21. 43. It is just with God to take away the Means of Grace from a People, when he sees they live unprofitably under them; *Rev. 2. 5. Luke 13. 6, 7.*

4. Seeing Ministers sow to their People spiritual, the People should not have any regret or grudging of Heart if they reap some of their temporal good things, *1 Cor. 9. 14.* God hath ordain'd that they that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. It is but just and reasonable, that they who by undertaking that holy Calling are taken off from the ways of gaining a Livelihood in the World, should be provided for by them whose Souls they watch over: and seeing the People receive spiritual things from them, *viz. Instruction and Assistance in their Christian Course,* in order to their obtaining eternal Life, it is agreeable both to Reason and Scripture, that they should receive temporal

Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick. 613

temporal Supplies from their People, where they are not otherwise provided for. Yet this ought not to be a Minister's chief End and Aim in setting his hand to this Work, but to glorify God in the Conversion and Salvation of Souls. For what will it profit a Minister to gain his Peoples Tithes or Contribution, and by Negligence and Carelessness lose his Peoples Souls? Ministers are to be Lights to their Flocks, and both by their Doctrine, and their own Life, to lead them in the way to Heaven. What horrible Ingratitude and Unworthiness is it then in such, as endeavour to extinguish those Lights, either by withdrawing the Oil of Maintenance, or blowing them out with the Wind of Persecution? 1 Cor. 9. 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14. Rom. 15. 27. Gal. 6. 6.

C H A P. XXXV.

Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick.

LET such as enjoy Health and Strength, the right Use of their Understandings, and the intire Use of their Limbs and Senses, be very thankful to the Lord, and humbly and heartily bless his Name for so great Mercies. Few value these Mercies so highly as they ought to do, the want of which would teach us the Worth and Value of them. Let us therefore, while we enjoy these Favours from God, magnify his great Goodness for them, and let us charge upon our selves these two things.

1. Let us frequently call to mind, how many Millions in the World there are that want these Mercies; how many distracted, distemper'd, diseas'd, decrepit, maim'd, blind, deform'd People there are, and such whose Life is a continual Burden to them. Let us consider who makes us to differ from these miserable ones. Might not God, for our Sins, justly inflict the like, or worse Miseries on us; and for our Abuse, or want of a right Improvement of these Mercies, justly deprive us of the Use and Enjoyment of them? Let us therefore be very humble and thankful, and stir up our Hearts to bless and praise the Lord, as holy David did, Psal. 116. 12. & 103. 1, 2.

614 *Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick.*

2. Let us make it our main Care, while these Mercies are continu'd to us, to be doing the great Work and Business for which we were sent into the World.

(1.) To honour God. (2.) To secure our Souls, and work out our Salvation. (3.) To do good to others.

Health is an advantageous Season for these great Duties; whereas Sicknes, or other bodily Distempers, do exceedingly indispose and unfit us for any of them. To do these in time of Health, out of Judgment and Choece, out of Love to God, and a Desire to please him (before Death seems to make any near Approach unto us) will be a great Argument of our Sincerity, and a Foundation of great Comfort, when Sicknes seizeth on us. But when our Understanding is disturb'd with Pain, the Mind clouded, the Heart fill'd with Fears, and the Body distemper'd, how hard is it for such a one (especially if he have neglected his Soul before) to do any thing now tending to his Salvation? What a sad thing would it be for a dying Person to need Instruction, in order to the obtaining those Graces which he should now be exercising? What desperate Hazards do such Persons run themselves upon? The Physician and his carnal Friends will tell him, he must not trouble himself with sad Thoughts, lest he weaken, if not destroy his Body: The Minister (if he will be faithful to him) must charge his Sins upon him, and labour to awaken his Conscience, to bring him to Repentance, Humiliation, and a deep Sorrow for them, lest he lose his Soul. Oh how much better is it for all of us, in time of Health, to apply our selves to those things which are of the greatest Importance, and of an eternal Concern to us, before Sicknes and Death approach us! But in order to our right Improvement of Sicknes, when we are exercis'd thereby, or any other Affliction we lie under;

I. Let such consider, that no Sicknes, Disease, Distemper of Body, or other Affliction comes by chance, but by the wise and orderly Guidance of the Hand of God; that it is his Messenger sent by him to them: and therefore let us hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it, Micah 6. 9.

II. Let them set themselves before the Tribunal of Christ, before whom they may (for ought they know) shortly appear, and seriously examine themselves as to the State of their Souls, how Matters stand between

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God and them as to their eternal Condition, and be humbly importunate at the Throne of Grace for Assistance, that they may rightly judg thereof, and not be mistaken therein. In this case it may be seasonable and useful to consult with, and take the Advice of their spiritual Guides, while they have some strength of Body, and the right use of their Understandings, before their Spirits are spent by their Distempers, that may be a Hindrance from conversing with them.

III. Having good grounds to hope they are in a State of Reconciliation with God, interested in his special Grace and Favour, in and thro Christ; that they have been brought by Faith to a saving Closure with him upon Gospel-Terms, as their only Lord and Saviour; have betaken themselves to him, to receive from him those great and glorious Benefits, to have them procur'd by his infinite Merits and Intercession, to have their Natures savingly renew'd and sanctify'd, and to have a Supply of all Grace and spiritual Strength from him, thro his Holy Spirit dwelling and abiding in them; and that they are interested in that everlasting Covenant which is well order'd in all things, and is the Portion of every true Believer: Let them renew again that Covenant with God in Christ, by renew'd Acts of Faith, receiving him, and rejoicing in the height of that Relation to him; resigning themselves to him, and fiducially depending and resting on him alone for their whole Salvation, and the Accomplishment of his gracious Promises, both for Time and Eternity.

Let them also in his Strength, begging the Assistance of his Holy Spirit, set upon the Duty of renew'd Repentance, for all the Iniquities and Transgressions of their Heart and Life. Let them seriously examine themselves concerning them, and the Aggravations of them, as particularly as they can call them to mind, which they have been guilty of; in order to their greater and most deep Humiliation for them, and turning from them to the Lord, who is a Judg that cannot be deceiv'd, nor will be mock'd: who is righteous as well as gracious, to whom all our Sins are naked and open in his sight, and for all which we are to be accountable. Our original and actual Sins, of Omission and Commission, against the Law, and against the Gospel, against Mercies, against

R. r 4 Judg.

616 *Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick.*

Judgments, against Promises, and Vows of better Obedience; all our sinful Thoughts, and sinful Affections, and Motions of our Hearts; all our sinful Words, and sinful Actions, with the several Aggravations of all these, are known unto him; yea, our secretest Sins are set in the Light of his Countenance, and call for our unfeign'd and deep Sorrow and Repentance for, and on the account of them, and for our sincere renew'd Purposes and Resolutions (thro the Grace and Strength of Christ) against them for the future.

IV. It will be requisite that such as are under Sickness, which may prove mortal to them, should settle their Estates and worldly Affairs (if they have not already done it, as in prudence they should, in time of Health) that their Minds may be free for spiritual Exercises, and not disturb'd with earthly Cares and Business. If they are conscious of Wrong done to any, let them labour to give them what Satisfaction they are able, that the Guilt of those Sins remain not on their Consciences. Let them seek Reconciliation where any Difference has been, and freely and heartily forgive those that have done any Wrong to them, remembering how much they stand in need of Pardon and Forgiveness from the Lord. Let them be as useful as they can to others by seasonable Counsel and Advice, that they may live unto God, and lay a good Foundation against the time to come. The words of sick and dying Persons use to be much heeded and remembred: Let them decline as much as may be the Visits of vain and worldly Persons, that are likely to hinder, and not promote spiritual Discourse and Meditation.

V. Let them endeavour to recollect God's wonderful Favours and Blessings bestow'd upon them, to stir up their Hearts to praise and magnify his Holy Name: How many may find abundant Matter of Praise and Thankfulness for Mercies bestow'd on them in a continued Course all their Lives! and on the account thereof may well cry out, as the Psalmist did, *What shall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?*

VI. Let them consider God's Aim and Design in sending Sickness upon them: Let them inquire into the meaning of it, and consider what God now calleth them to; let them hearken to the Voice of the Rod; let them consider

Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick. 617

consider what Corruptions they are especially to mortify, what Sins to forsake, what Duties to perform, what Graces to exercise: and tho they may and ought to use lawful and fit means for the removing of their Sickness, Pains, or other Distempers (seeking to the Lord for his Blessing thereupon) yet let them not forget to pray as earnestly, and to engage the Prayers of others, to have their Distempers sanctify'd, as remov'd: *Blessed is the Man whom thou chastenest, and teachest out of thy Law; Psal. 94. 12.*

Afflictions alone are not enough to evidence a Man to be blessed, and in a State of Grace, except they prove teaching, sanctify'd Afflictions. Evidences of Grace and the Favour of God consist in inward Impressions, not outward Dispensations. When God takes away the Disease, and does not take away the Guilt and Dominion of Sin, does not pardon and sanctify the sick Person; it's not a compleat Deliverance, but only a *Reprieve* from present Execution. The Blessing of Affliction is Divine Instruction, therefore they that are put by God into the School of Affliction, should seriously apply themselves to learn those Lessons which they ought to learn therein. *As,*

1. *Obediential Submission and Resignation to the Will of God.* We must not dispute our Cross, but take it up: *Aaron held his Peace, Lev. 10. 3.* We may indeed, and ought to seek unto the Lord, in the way of his Appointment (as was said before) for Deliverance from Sickness, or other Afflictions, but yet with Resignation of our selves to his holy Will. Patience is not a Stupidity or Insensibleness of God's Hand, but a Calmness of Mind upon wise and holy Grounds; and therefore if the Sickness he sends upon us prove either long, or tedious, or painful, yet we must take heed of murmuring or repining, or charging God foolishly: for God is so just, he is not to be question'd in any of his Dispensations towards his Creatures; so good, he is not to be suspected; and so strong, he is not to be resisted. Impatience therefore will augment our Pain, and increase our Guilt. It is indeed a hard matter, when we are afflicted, in *Patience to possess our Souls*; but let us consider not so much what we feel, as what we deserve: any thing on this side *Hell* is Mercy, and will so appear to a truly humbled Soul.

618 *Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick.*

2. A deeper loathing of our natural *Corruption*, which is the Spring and Fountain of all our actual Sins, and the meritorious Cause of all Afflictions that we can undergo. Afflictions sanctify'd discover the unknown and secret Corruptions of the Heart: Deut. 8. 2. *The Lord thy God led thee these forty Years in the Wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know (viz. make thee know) what was in thine Heart.* By such Afflictions also the Lord does sometimes not only correct our Sins past, but prevent us from falling into many other Sins, which otherwise we might have committed. Like a good Father, who suffers his Child to scorch his Finger in a Candle, that he may be the more careful, and beware falling into the Fire. A Child of God, when a Disease is sanctify'd, may say as David, *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn thy Statutes*, Psal. 119. 71. *And before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy Word*, Psal. 119. 67. We are chasten'd of the Lord, that we should not be condemn'd with the World. With one Cross, God sometimes makes two Cures; the Chastisement of Sins past, and Prevention of Sins to come: for tho the eternal Punishment of Sin (as it proceeds from Justice) is fully pardon'd to Believers in the Sacrifice of Christ; yet we are not (without serious judging of our selves) exempted from the temporal Chastisement of Sin, which proceedeth from the Love of God for our Good. Hence *Nathan* told *David*, that his Sins were pardon'd, yet that the Sword (of Chastisement) should not depart from his House, and that the Child should die. God, like a skilful Physician, seeing the Soul poison'd with prevailing Corruption, and knowing that the reigning of the Flesh would prove the Ruin of the Soul, purges (this way) the remainders of Sin and Corruption in the Heart, and subdues the Flesh, in order to the Sanctification of the Soul. Oh then let us see the Odiousness of Sin, which causes God to chasten so severely sometimes his own Children, whom otherwise he loves so dearly.

3. God visiteth with Distempers of Body, and other Afflictions sometimes, to wean our Hearts from too much loving this World and worldly Vanities, and to cause us more earnestly to desire and long for Heaven; as the Children of *Israel*, had they not suffer'd so much in *Egypt*,

Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick. 619

Egypt, would not have been so willing to go towards *Canaan*. If sometimes the Pleasures and Enjoyments of this World were not imbitter'd to us, and some Affliction mix'd with our Prosperity here, we should (like the Children of the World) be too apt to forget God, and to fall too much in love with our present Enjoyments, and forget our Resting-place, where only true and permanent Pleasures and Enjoyments can be found. But in the Night of Adversity, and in sad Dispensations, we are likely to prize Communion with God more, and to be more spiritual and heavenly-minded; how delightful then is a Beam of his Love and Favour?

4. We should learn hereby to *pray* more earnestly and fervently for our selves and others. Sometimes our cold, slight, and formal Devotions are quicken'd and made more fervent, for Pardon, and Grace, and greater Measures thereof, for Help and Relief, when we are under Affliction.

5. By such Afflictions we may learn to understand more clearly and experimentally: As, (1.) The Evil and Danger of Sin. (2.) The Emptiness of the Creature (as was before hinted.) So, (3.) The Preciousness of Christ, and what a high Value we ought to set upon his Sufferings and Undertaking for Believers.

6. To mind and esteem the *Promises* of God more; whilst in time of Health (thro Distractions without, and Corruptions within) the Study and Mediation of them may have been too much neglected by us; but in the greatest Distress, and under Afflictions, there are no Cordials like unto *them*.

7. To teach us to live more by *Faith*. Faith takes the Soul off from Creature-Confidences, and teaches it to stay it self on *God* alone; it shews us from whence our Help must come, and on whom alone we can safely depend, who is the only firm Foundation for us to rest upon. We are (when our Affliction is sanctify'd to us) led thereby to that *Rock* that is *higher than our selves*, the *Rock of Ages*, who is our rightful Lord and Owner, and who has the only rightful Propriety in us; who created us, sustains us, and redeem'd us to himself, that we should be unto him for a Name, and a Praise, and might glorify him. The most effectual Means also to obtain the Mercies we stand in need of (whether spiritual or temporal)

620 Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick.

poral) from the Hand of God, is in the way of an humble Trust and Dependence on him: 2 Chron. 20. 12. *We have no Might against this great Company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do, but our Eyes are unto thee.* When we see and apprehend our own Insufficiency, and God's All-sufficiency, and cast our selves on his Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; then he usually affords Help and Succour to us: Gen. 22. 12, 13, 14.

8. To be more humble. By Sickness and other Afflictions, God sometimes takes down the Pride of the Heart, and makes it humble, soft, and pliable to his Will.

9. To be more thankful for the Mercies we enjoy. We seldom are sufficiently sensible of the Worth of our Mercies, till God begins to deprive us of them.

10. By Affliction and Sickness God exercises his Children, and the Graces he bestows upon them. He refineth and trieth their Faith, Hope, and Love, and other Graces, as the Goldsmith doth his Gold in the Furnace, to make it brighter thereby; which, without this Trial, would rust as Iron unexercis'd, or corrupt like standing Waters that are not pour'd from Vessel to Vessel, whose Taste remaineth, and whose Scent is not chang'd.

11. That the Children and faithful Servants of God may demonstrate the Truth of their Love and Faithfulness to him. A Hypocrite will serve God while he prospereth and blesteth him, as the Devil falsely accus'd Job only to have done: but it is an Evidence of the Sincerity of our Love to God, when, tho he seems to be angry and displeas'd with us, yet we will love, and serve him, and cleave to him; tho he seemeth to reject us, and cast us out of his Favour, yea, to wound and kill us as an Enemy, then to say as Job, *Thou thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.* To love and serve him, and to trust in his Mercy at such times of our Correction and Misery, is very pleasing to the Lord, and an Evidence of our Uprightness.

12. It is a singular Help (when sanctify'd) to further true Conversion, to drive us home to our heavenly Father by unfeign'd Repentance and Faith in the Blood of his Son. Egypt's Burdens made Israel cry unto God, and Misery drove the prodigal Child to sue for his Father's Grace and Mercy; and many have been driven to come to Christ, under their Diseases and Afflictions, who otherwise

Directions to the Healthy, and the Sick. 621

wise would have neglected a Saviour, and never have sought unto him for his saving Health and Grace: And blessed is that Cross, that draweth a Sinner unto Christ, to confess his Misery, and to implore his saving Grace and Mercy; who never refuseth any that come sincerely to him, tho' weather-driven by Affliction and Misery.

13. Affliction should work in us Pity and Compassion towards others in Distress and Misery, to have a Fellow-feeling of their Calamities, as if we suffer'd with them: for this cause Christ himself would suffer, and be tempted, that he might be *touch'd with the feeling of our Infirmities*.

14. By Afflictions God makes his People conformable to the Image of Christ, who being the *Captain of our Salvation*, was made perfect thro' Sufferings; he first bare the Cross, before he was crown'd with Glory.

15. Sicknes should teach us to set an high Value and Price upon Time. Sicknes, and bodily Distempers, and Pains, cry aloud in our Ears, *Redeem Time! O redeem Time!* for praying, for meditating, for clearing our Evidences for Heaven, &c. How many are there who, when their time is almost at an end, would give a World (if it was possible) to redeem their mispent Time?

But now to conclude this Head: Let those whom God shall please to bring again out of their Affliction, to deliver from their Sicknes, and renew the Lease of their Lives, be exhorted,

(1.) To consider what Benefit they have receiv'd by their Afflictions; and if they have learn'd the foremention'd Lessons thereby (thro' Grace) let them study to be truly thankful: when God has accompany'd his Corrections with the Teachings of his Holy Spirit, they are become to them an unspeakable Mercy, he hath turn'd their *Water into Wine*.

(2.) Let them take heed of *forgetting*, but labour to keep alive the Teachings of God's Spirit, and a thankful Sense of what God hath done for their Souls. Let them study to maintain that gracious humble Frame of Spirit, which God brought them into by their Afflictions. If we be not exceeding watchful, we shall find a Difference between our Hearts under them, and when the Affliction is taken off. We are very prone, *Pharisee*-like (having much of that Disposition in all of us) to harden when the Storm is over.

(3.) Let

(3.) Let them renew often the Remembrance of those sharp and bitter Afflictions, those sad Reasonings, Fears, and Misgivings of Heart they had under them; their Aptness to Impatience, and how happy they thought those were, who were freed from them: and this should make us humble and thankful.

(4.) Let them remember their Vows and Promises made to the Lord in their Sickness and Distress, and labour to be such as they promis'd God, themselves, and possibly others, they would be.

(5.) Let them pity and pray for those that are in Affliction, for the like spiritual Benefit and Advantage to them, which they have themselves receiv'd thereby.

C H A P. XXXVI.

Of Death.

TO walk with God here on Earth while we live, and to be prepar'd for Death, that we may live and enjoy him for ever in Heaven, when this short and momentary Life is at an end; is the great Work we have to do, the great Concern we have to mind in our present Pilgrimage; to look and live beyond Time and Days, and to make provision for an eternal State; to know, and love, and obey, and delight in God here; to contemplate his glorious Excellencies and Perfections, to live upon him here as our chief Good and Happiness, to live to him as our last End, and to be found ready at last to live with him for ever; to enter upon that beatifical Vision, and to pass into that Life of Love and Holiness, which the Saints and Angels live above (being made perfect) in the full Fruition and Enjoyment of him; is that which is truly worthy the Name of living, and of the Care and Sollicitude of immortal Souls. And in order hereto, to draw towards a close of all that has been already written for this end, let us observe these following Directions.

I. *Meditate* often and seriously on your Death and Dissolution, even in the time of your Health. It's said of

Joseph

Joseph of Arimathea, that he made his Sepulcher in his Garden, that in the midst of his Delights he might think of Death. Often retire, and take your self alone, and walk in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and do not start from the Thoughts of it; bring up your Heart, and enure it to look upon Death, and to handle that Serpent: look into the Grave, and an eternal State that is beyond it, to which we are all hastening. Consider Death as making its approach to each of us in particular, and may be upon us before we are aware. O therefore let us be diligently and daily preparing for it, that when it comes and attaches us, we may be found in such a gracious state, having such a Frame of Spirit, and walking in such a holy way of Life; that we may bid it welcome, and be able to say, with the blessed Apostle, *I desire to be dissolv'd, and to be with Christ.*

The frequent Meditation of *Death*, will be an excellent Means,

1. To quicken the Soul to a deep Humiliation and Repentance for all our past Sins.

2. To repress in us the eager and impatient Desire of Riches, and the Love of this World.

3. To antidote us against Sin, for the time to come.

4. To make us improve Time, and carefully to work out our Salvation.

II. Labour to take away from your own Death the Power and Strength thereof. The *Philistines* seeing *Sampson* so exceeding strong, labour'd to know wherein his Power and Strength principally consisted, and rested not till his *Hair* was cut, wherein it lay. Let us consider therefore wherein the Strength of Death lies, and that is in *Sin*; 1 Cor. 15. 56. *The Sting of Death is Sin.* Death cannot hurt us, but by the Force and Power of our own particular Sins. If Death be but disarm'd of these, that are its Sting and Poison, it cannot hurt us: we may safely handle a Serpent when the Sting is out. It concerns us therefore to use effectual means, that our Sins may be remov'd and pardon'd, and (before we die) to get the Strength of Death abolish'd. Now the way to do this, is,

1. To humble our Souls unfeignedly before the Lord for all our past Sins, and penitently to renounce and forsake them.

2. To

2. To fly to Christ, to sprinkle our Souls with his precious Blood, and humbly to depend on him for Pardon and Grace suitable to all the Necessities of our Souls. *He is our Peace*, Eph. 2. 14. neither can we, by all we are able to do, make our peace with God, but only thro Faith in his Blood. When the destroying Angel saw the Blood of the Lamb sprinkled on the Posts of any Door, he pass'd by that House, and they within were safe; *Exod. 12. 23.* So that Soul which is sprinkled with the Blood of Jesus Christ, is so safe from the destroying Angel of God, that he shall not do it any hurt. We must by Faith apply the Blood of Christ to our own Souls. Faith is the Hand of the Soul, and by Faith the Soul puts her Hand into the Wounds of Christ, and besprinkles herself therewith, applying the Merits and Virtue thereof to it self; and from thence we must hope for Peace and Reconciliation with God.

3. In the Strength of his Grace to return to him, and to walk in the Ways of Holiness. When the Sting of Death is taken away by Christ Jesus, as it is to all true Believers, that it cannot hurt them, Death it self will be of great advantage to them; it will be, tho a dark, yet short Passage to a glorious Palace, to those blissful Mansions, where there is *Fulness of Joy and Pleasures for ever*: so that every Believer may triumph as *St. Paul* did, *O Death, where is thy Sting! O Grave, where is thy Victory! Thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory thro our Lord Jesus Christ.* But now to all unbelieving, impenitent, and unpardon'd Sinners, how deadly, how incurable is the Sting of Death? Death is Death with a witness, and Hell into the bargain, to all such as die in their Sins. No sight in the world is more dreadful, than to see a dying Sinner (with his Conscience newly awaken'd) conflicting with Death and Sin, the Breach of God's holy and righteous Law, and his Curse, together. O how sad, how intolerably sad is it, to see a Man that hath gone on in a long, careless, obstinate Course of Sinning (now at the point of Death) to have his Eyes open'd, and to see himself on the brink of that dreadful Pit, and unavoidably falling into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone!

Obj. I would willingly apply the Merits of Christ's Death and Passion to my self; but I am conscious of so much Unworthiness, seeing nothing in my self why the

Merits

Merits of Christ's Death should belong to me; that I cannot and dare not apply them to myself.

Ans. It is good to be conscious to our selves of our own Unworthiness, but not so as to be kept thereby from applying Christ, and the Merits of his Death and Passion to our Comfort. And truly if we would consider, that God respecteth his own Goodness, and not ours, in the offering of his Son; and that his Grace is ever most free; this Conceit of our own Unworthiness can be no just Plea against the applying of Christ, with the Benefits of his Death and Passion, to our own Souls Comfort and Support. It should rather be an Encouragement unto us; because the more unworthy we are in our own sight and sense, the more worthy we are in the account of Christ. The greatest Worthiness that any Christian can here attain unto, is in being truly sensible of his own Unworthiness.

Obj. 2. My Sins are so many for number, and so heinous in their quality, that I cannot imagine that Christ should belong unto me; and therefore dare not apply him, nor the Benefits of his Death and Passion, to myself: I fear it would be *Presumption* so to do.

Ans. The more sinful we are in our own Apprehension, the fitter we are to close with Jesus Christ, and to apply the Merits of his Death to our selves. For in that gracious Invitation of Christ, *Mat. 11. 28.* we find no other Qualification put in, but a Sense of Sin; *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.* The Parties invited to come unto Christ, are such as are sensible of, and thereupon groan under the Weight and Burden of their Sins; as the words in the Greek (*πονῶντες & ἀπορροπῆται*) properly signify. And, *Luke 5. 32.* Christ professeth, *he came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners*; not such as were righteous in their own Conceit, but such as were Sinners in their own Sense and Apprehension, truly sensible of their Sins. So that Sense of Sin is the only Qualification requisite to an Application of Jesus Christ.

Obj. 3. I have often sinned against Knowledge and Conscience, and therefore I fear I have committed that unpardonable Sin, the Sin against the *Holy Ghost*.

Ans. Tho the Sin against the *Holy Ghost* be a Sin against Knowledge and Conscience, yet every Sin (yea,

every grievous Sin) against Knowledge and Conscience, is not the Sin against the *Holy Ghost*; for they may be without Malice of Heart, which this cannot be: And therefore if thou hast not sinned with a malicious Heart, that is, merely because you would displease God, and grieve his Spirit, you have not committed the Sin against the Holy Ghost.

III. Inure your self to die to this World, and the Enjoyments of it, every day more and more. The Apostle *Paul* tells us, *he died daily*, 1 Cor. 15. 31. If we would learn to do so, it would not be so hard to die, when we come to it in good earnest. Death is not so strong to him whose natural Strength hath been wasted with a long Sickness, as to him who lies but a few days sick, and has Strength of Nature to make resistance. That Christian whose Love to this Life, and the Contentments of it, hath been for many years consuming and dying, will more easily part with them, than he whose Love is strong unto them. We must consider we are but Pilgrims and Strangers here; Heaven is the proper Country of holy Souls, we should therefore be provided for our Removal thither: we should pack up, and send our best things away beforehand; our Love, our Hearts, our Delights and Joys, before we set out our selves for those heavenly Mansions.

IV. Consider what great Reasons there are, that those that are truly godly and real Christians should not much fear Death. Indeed nothing can sweeten Death, and make it desirable to a Christian, but only an Interest in Christ. *Death* is one of those things that hath the most harsh and ungrateful Taste to a Creature's Palate that can be. We cannot think with any Comfort of entering upon an unseen and eternal State, without some solid ground to hope, that Christ will own us there for his. But if we have that, there are many Reasons why we should not dread Death. For,

I. They that are truly godly, shall die but once; that is, a natural Death only: the Wicked die twice, not only a natural, but spiritual Death. The natural Death stands in the Separation of the Soul from the Body, the spiritual in the Separation of the Soul and Body from God; *Rev.* 20. 6. He that hath been spiritually regenerated, and born again, that is, ingrafted into Christ by

Faith;

Faith; shall die but once, and that is only a natural Death.

2. Death is not a Destruction, or Annihilation either of Soul or Body, but only an Alteration and Change of the Condition of them both, and that for the better, to all those that have an Interest in Christ. Such may say with *Paul*, Phil. 1. 21. *To me to live is Christ, and to die is Gain.* For,

(1.) Tho Death separate Soul and Body, yet it can separate neither from *Christ*; their Bodies and Souls both being part of his myſtical Body, who is the Head and Saviour of the whole Person: *Col.* 3. 3, 4. The Conjunction here between Christ and Believers remains for ever, which must needs be matter of exceeding Joy and Comfort to them that by a lively Faith are united to him.

(2.) The *Body* is freed from all Sickness and Pains, from all the Miseries, Troubles, and all the Calamities of this Life.

(3.) It ceaseth then to be an Instrument of *Sin*. Sin and the Temptations to it are the great Grievance and Burden of the Servants of God, which they groan to be deliver'd from; and by Death they will be deliver'd from them for ever.

(4.) The Bodies of the Saints shall be rais'd in a far greater *Glory* at the general Resurrection, and with the Soul live an everlasting Life of Glory and Happiness together again.

The Soul will also gain this threefold Advantage by Death:

1. It will change this Prison for a Palace, this Tabernacle of Clay for a heavenly Mansion.

2. Its Qualities will be chang'd: here it's infested with sinful and unruly Passions and Affections of several sorts, which are a great Annoyment to it; but there it shall be freed from them, and made perfectly holy.

3. Its Company will be chang'd: it leaves the Company of Sinners, and gains the Company of Saints and Angels; yea, it shall, in that State of Separation, have Fellowship with the Blessed Trinity, in whose Presence there is Fulness of Joy, and at whose Right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore; *Psal.* 16. 11. Christ hath taken away the Sting, and Mischief, and destructive Power of

Death; he hath alter'd the Property of it, and hath made it a Gate to Bliss and Happiness for all that are his. Let the truly godly and serious Christian therefore not fix his Mind so much on the Pangs and Torments of Death, as upon the blessed Estate that follows after it, and so fortify his Heart against the Fear of it.

C H A P. XXXVII.

Of the Last Judgment.

IT is very necessary, and would be of singular use and advantage to us in our Christian Course, in order to the faithful Performance of every Duty, and the ordering our Conversation aright, that we firmly believe, and have frequent, deep, and serious Meditations of the Day of Judgment.

The Scripture intimates to us a twofold Judgment to come :

I. *Particular*, which follows immediately after Death; Eccles. 12. 7. *Then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall return to God who gave it, to be judg'd by him, as the Chaldee Paraphrast doth well explain it.* And that historical Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus* shews how, immediately after they were dead, the one went to Hell, the other to *Abraham's Bosom* : as also what our Saviour said to the Thief upon the Cross, *Luke 23. 43. To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* These intimate the Soul's being determin'd immediately to its final State, and that every one particularly when he dieth is also judg'd, and receiveth his Sentence either of Reward or Punishment; which can never be revers'd, but must abide for ever.

II. *General*, at the End of the World. The Certainty of which may appear to us,

1. From the Voice of *natural Conscience*, which proclaims it : *Felix trembled*, when *Paul* preach'd of the Judgment to come, *Acts 24. 25.* Every Man, tho he have not Divine Revelation, hath a Law that is born with him, enacted in his very Nature, and written upon his

his Heart, which will acquaint him with many material Parts, and some of the great Lines of his Duty; and that by virtue of this Law he is obnoxious to the just Judgment of God, and stands accountable to him for all Breaches and Violations of it: *Rom. 2. 15.*

2. From the *Justice* of God, which requires it; who being the Judge of the World, will (we may be assur'd) judge it in Righteousness. In this Life, it's evident, Rewards and Punishments are not correspondent to the Carriage and Behaviour of Men in it; and the Conditions of Men (tho they are under the Disposal of Providence) are such as shew no sign of an universal Justice. The Wicked oftentimes flourish and prosper, while the Righteous are afflicted and in misery. There is a Judgment therefore to come in another World, *a Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God, Rom. 2. 5.* who being a God infinitely just and righteous, will then shew a perfect Demonstration of his Justice, and Men shall evidently discern *between the Righteous and the Wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not; Mal. 3. 18.*

3. From the clear and manifest Declaration of the Will of God in his Word. We have an express Manifestation of God's Will and Purpose concerning a Judgment to come, *Eccles. 12. 14. For God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. Acts 17. 30, 31. But now God commandeth all Men every where to repent: Because he hath appointed a Day in the which he will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordain'd.* There is no Doctrine more clear and fundamental in the Word of God, than that of eternal Judgment; *Heb. 6. 2.* wherein the Judge will sentence all Men to an everlasting State.

4. From a Representation of it made to the Eyes of some of God's Servants in Divine Visions; as to *Daniel, Chap. 7. 9. I beheld till the Thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did set, whose Garment was white as Snow, and the Hair of his Head like the pure Wool; his Throne was like the fiery Flame, and his Wheels as burning Fire. Ver. 10. A fiery Stream issu'd and came forth from before him; Thousand Thousands ministred unto him, and Ten Thousand times Ten Thousand stood before him: the Judgment was set, and the Books were open'd.* And

also to St. John, Rev. 20. 12. *And I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God, and the Books were open'd: and another Book was open'd, which is the Book of Life, and the Dead were judg'd out of those things which were written in the Books, according to their Works.* The Representation of it to the Eye in those Divine Visions, is a farther Assurance of the Certainty of it.

II. Let us enquire who the Person is, who shall be the Judge at that great Assizes, who shall sit upon the Throne, before whose Tribunal we shall appear, and from whose Mouth we may expect our Sentence. The judiciary Power is the Power of God, and is common to the three Persons, being one and the same God; but the Execution of this judiciary Power is committed particularly to the Son: he is ordain'd of God to be the Judge of Quick and Dead; Acts 10. 42. *He will judge the World by that Man whom he hath ordain'd, &c.* Acts 17. 31. *The Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son; he hath given him Authority to execute Judgment, John 5. 22, 27.* There is therefore an original, supreme, judiciary Power delegated, deriv'd, and given by Commission: *All Power is given to him in Heaven and Earth, because he is the Son of Man; John 5. 27.* The Father who is only God, and took not on him the Nature of Men nor Angels, judgeth no Man (nor the Holy Ghost, for the same reason) but hath committed all Judgment to the Son: and the Reason thereof appears, because he is not only the Son of God (and so truly God) but also the Son of Man, and so truly Man;

1. Who suffer'd so much for the Sins of Men. God the Father was pleas'd to confer this Honour on Christ, as a suitable Reward to his great Obedience and Sufferings; even to commit the judging of the World to him, which is call'd his Kingdom, Mat. 16. 28. 2 Tim. 4. 1. And with relation to this Power and Authority, the Title of King is given to him, Mat. 25. 34. And the Scripture, speaking of Christ's Coming, calleth it his glorious Appearance, Mat. 16. 27. & 25. 31. It's called, Tit. 2. 13. *the glorious Appearance of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.* The great Reward of Christ's Self-denial and Sufferings doth principally consist in having the Judgment of the World committed to him: that he that was arraign'd and condemn'd by the Powers of the World in his

his State of Humiliation on our account, should have Authority given him to summon all both small and great before him ; yea, the Kings, and Potentates, and Judges of the Earth, to appear at his Bar, and receive their Sentence at his mouth : and this must needs be a great Honour to him. *He humbled himself, and became obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross : wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name ; that at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth ; and that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father : Phil. 2. 8; 9, 10, 11. So Rom. 14. 11. both places referring to that, Isa. 45. 23. I have sworn by my self, &c. that unto me every Knee shall bow.* As Christ in his human Nature was unjustly judg'd, so in that Nature shall he justly judg. At his first Coming, tho he was not a Sinner, yet he came in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, Rom. 8. 3. but at the Day of Judgment he shall come as one discharg'd of that Debt, without Sin, Heb. 9. 28. and as one highly honour'd by God the Father.

2. Because God making a general Judgment, will have a visible Judg, which all they that shall be judg'd may see : *John 5. 27. Rev. 1. 7. And hath given him Authority to execute Judgment also, because he is the Son of Man. — And every Eye shall see him ; both those whom he shall crown, and those whom he shall condemn.*

He is represented in Scripture as making the great Separation between Man and Man ; as an Husbandman, separating the Wheat from the Chaff and Tares ; as a Fisherman, gathering the good Fish, casting the bad away ; as a Bridegroom, receiving the wise, excluding the foolish Virgins ; as a Master, distinguishing the Servants of his Family, rewarding the faithful, punishing the unprofitable ; as a Shepherd, dividing the Sheep from the Goats, placing one on the right hand, the other on the left : And hence he is appointed Judg of the World. Of his first Coming it's said, *God sent not his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World thro him might be saved.* He came not then as a Judg, but as a Redeemer ; but his second Coming will be to judg the Quick and the Dead.

We shall next enquire into the Nature and Manner of this Judgment.

I. Of the Preparations for the Judg's Approach; which the Scripture sets forth by the Arch-Angel's Trumpet, by which all the World shall be (as it were) summon'd to appear before Christ's Tribunal: 1 Thess. 4. 16. *For the Lord himself shall descend with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God; and the Dead in Christ shall rise first.* At the giving of the Law, the Voice of the Trumpet was exceeding loud; but what a terrible and dreadful Sound will this be? such as shall be heard all the World over, raising the Dead out of their Graves, and summoning the whole World to come to Judgment.

II. The Nature and Manner of this great Judgment. The Scripture represents it to us under a formal judiciary Process; wherein,

1. The Judg himself will appear exceeding glorious, adorn'd with Majesty, and cloth'd with unspeakable Lustre: Mat. 16. 27. *He will come with Power and great Glory, even the Glory of the Father.* The Glory of a thousand Suns made into one, will be nothing to that wherein Christ shall appear in Man's Nature, at that great Day. The Beams of his Glory shall dazle the Eyes of Sinners, and delight the Eyes of Saints. When his Glory shall be reveal'd, the Saints shall be glad with exceeding Joy: 1 Pet. 4. 13.

2. His Attendance will be very glorious: the glorious Angels shall be Christ's Attendants at that Day. If at the time of his Nativity, Temptation, Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, they readily attended him; how much more shall they do it at this great Day? Mat. 25. 31. it's said, *The Son of Man shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him:* the number of whom will therefore be exceeding great, and the Train will be exceeding glorious. What Glory shall be in that Day, when the Servants of the Judg shall be Angels of Power, every one stronger than an earthly Army; Angels whose Countenances are like Lightning, and as much exceeding in Glory the greatest Princes in the World in their highest Pomp and Splendour, as the Sun doth a Clod of Earth?

3. There will be a Throne set, a Tribunal, a Judgment-Seat erected: Mar. 19. 28. *Ye which have followed*

me in the Regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the Throne of his Glory, ye shall sit upon twelve Thrones judging the twelve Tribes of Israel. And that this Throne will be a Seat not only of Majesty, but of Judicature, see Rom. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. We must all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

4. There will be a personal Appearance of all Men before that Seat of Judicature, on which Christ shall sit: Rev. 20. 12. And I saw the Dead, small and great, stand before God, &c. Mat. 25. 32. And before him shall be gather'd all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats.

5. When they who are to be judg'd are brought before the Judgment-Seat of Christ, all their Actions and Works shall be manifested: 1 Cor. 4. 5. Eccles. 12. 14. For God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil. To this end, in the Vision of Daniel, it's said, when the Judgment was set, the Books were open'd, Dan. 7. 9. And in St. John's Vision, Rev. 20. 12. The Books were open'd, and the Dead were judg'd out of the things that were written in the Books, according to their Works.

Divines speak of a threefold Book that will then be open'd:

(1.) The Book of God's Word, wherein the Law and Gospel are written, with all the Duties commanded, and Sins forbidden in them both; together with the Promises and Threatnings of God contain'd therein.

(2.) The Book of God's Omniscience and Remembrance.

(3.) The Book of Conscience, which God maintains as a Register in every Man's Breast: Jer. 17. 1. The Sin of Judah is written with a Pen of Iron, and with the Point of a Diamond it is graven upon the Table of their Heart. All Men will then be thoroughly awaken'd, and all their Sins, with the several Aggravations of them, will be set in the view of their Consciences: Hidden things shall be brought to light in that day, 1 Cor. 4. 5, &c.

6. After the Manifestation of all their Actions, the Judg will pronounce his definitive Sentence upon all, according to their Actions. The Sentence of Absolution upon the Saints and Servants of God, in these words;

Come

Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you, from the Foundation of the World; Mat. 25. 34. The Saints of God will first be acquitted, before the Ungodly are condemn'd, that they may afterward join with Christ in judging the World; according to that in 1 Cor. 6. 2. where it's said *the Saints shall judg the World*; approving and magnifying the just Judgment and Sentence of Christ on Devils and wicked Men: probably according to that of the Angel, Rev. 16. 5. *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be; because thou hast judged thus.* And thus all the Saints shall be Judges; but yet some of them more eminently, as Assessors with Christ, as is intimated concerning the Apostles, Mat. 19. 28. *Ye also shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel.*

The Sentence of Condemnation that will pass upon the Wicked, we find recorded in Mat. 25. 41. *Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels.*

7. After the Promulgation of the Sentence, follows the Execution, the sending the Persons judg'd to their everlasting State, as it is written, Mat. 25. 46. *And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.*

IV. Having seen what will be the judiciary Proceedings of this great Day, according to the Scripture-Revelation concerning it; we come to consider, what will be the Consequents thereof.

1. Christ's resigning up his Kingdom (not his essential, but that which he administers as Mediator) to the Father; having subdu'd Sin and Death, and put all his Enemies under his feet, 1 Cor. 15. 24. *Then cometh the End, when he shall have deliver'd up the Kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all Rule, and all Authority, and Power.* Ver. 25. *For he must reign, till he hath put all Enemies under his feet, &c.* And Ver. 28. *And when all things shall be subdu'd unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be ALL IN ALL.*

2. The burning of the World, of which we read, 2 Pet. 3. 12. *Looking for and hasting unto the Coming of the Day of God, wherein the Heavens being on fire, shall be dissolv'd, and the Elements shall melt with fervent Heat.*

That

That they may not be utterly consum'd by this Fire, but renew'd, clarify'd, and purg'd, seems from hence probable; it being compar'd to a melting Fire, *ver. 10.* And the Apostle says, *The Creature shall be deliver'd from the Bondage of Corruption*, Rom. 8. 21. In the everlasting State, God will have all things new, even the World it self: the Use of which renew'd World, may either be for an Habitation for the Just, or that it may be continu'd as a standing Monument of God's Wisdom and Power.

(1.) What now remains, but that we carefully provide for this great and terrible Day of the Lord, by breaking off our Sins by sincere and unfeigned Repentance, and making our peace with God, in and by Christ, our blessed Mediator. O let us labour to secure our Interest in Christ, and our Union with him. He is the Judge: if he be our Advocate, we need fear nothing. *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*, Rom. 8. 1. The Head will not condemn his own Members.

(2.) Let us do good and communicate, and be merciful to the Poor; and more especially to those that are his, that are of the Household of Faith, and bear his Image, while we have Ability and Opportunity: *Mat. 25. 35, 36.* compar'd with *ver. 42, 43.* Christ hath told us aforehand what Questions he will ask when he cometh; **HAVE YOU FED, HAVE YOU VISITED, HAVE YOU CLOTHED?** 'Tis good we should be prepar'd for an Answer.

(3.) The Consideration of the Day of Judgment should have a mighty Influence upon us, to quicken us to and in every Duty thro our Christian Course, and to make us to endeavour to be true and real Christians. We should earnestly beg of God, now in this Day of his Grace, to make us sincere and upright, to furnish our Hearts with the Oil of true saving Grace, and that we may live in the Exercise thereof, according to the Station and Condition his Providence hath appointed for us, that whenever the Bridegroom cometh, we may be ready for him. And the Consideration thereof should make us take heed of *secret* Sins, as well as *open*. Some are apt to think, that if they can but sin in secret, and hide what they do from the eyes of Men, and so avoid Shame, they are safe enough. But alas! our great danger

ger is not from Men, but from God ; and that not now only, but hereafter.

And further, the Consideration of this great Judgment should make us endeavour faithfully to improve those Talents that God is pleas'd to entrust us with, because we are but Stewards, and must give an account of them. *To whom much is given, of them shall much be requir'd; Luke 12. 48.* This also may help to support and comfort us under the unjust Censures and Reproaches of evil Men. If we be innocent, God will one day bring forth *our Righteousness as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon-day, Psal. 37. 6.* With me, saith St. Paul, *1 Cor. 4. 3.* *it is a very small thing that I should be judg'd of you, or of Man's Judgment: he that judgeth me, is the Lord.* Indeed it is a thing very desirable, so to behave our selves that we may approve our Actions to wise and sober Men. But if that cannot be obtain'd, it will be a great satisfaction to us to approve them to our own Consciences, and to God, who is greater than our Hearts, and knoweth all things. And farther, this Consideration that Christ shall judg the World, may be matter of great Comfort to all sincere Christians, upon the account of their Sufferings and Services for him in this World. He in whose cause and for whose sake we suffer, is to give us our Reward. And for our Services (tho the best of them be imperfect, and not able to abide a strict Tryal before him) yet by virtue of his meritorious Obedience and Sufferings, we may comfortably expect to have the Imperfection of them pardon'd, and what was sincere in them accepted. And he being to be our Judg who was our *Sacrifice*, and is our *Advocate* with the Father, we may assure our selves that he will plead our Cause, and interpose his Merits for us. But as for the Wicked and Ungodly, sure it cannot but be matter of great Horrour and Amazement to them, to think of this Judg, and to consider that he whom, by their vicious and leud Lives and Practices, they have so highly offended, and even condemn'd in this World, and set light by, will sit as Judg upon them, and condemn them in the next. And therefore none have cause to wonder, to see Ministers so earnest and importunate with Sinners to come in to Christ, and to repent and turn to God by him, and to believe and obey his Gospel; that they may have him for

for their Friend, who will certainly be their Judg. And Ministers being employ'd as Ambassadors from this great King, and Judg of the World, to treat with Sinners, and to offer Peace to them on the Terms the Gospel prescribes, surely if they believe themselves what they preach to others, to be the Word and Law of him (who shall shortly judg both them, and those that hear them) how can they forbear, with all Importunity, to sollicite their Repentance and Conversion, and to warn them to flee from the Wrath that is to come? *Knowing the Terror of the Lord, says the Apostle, we persuade Men.*

Lastly, We should labour to assure our selves not only of the Certainty of this Great Day, and that Christ himself will be the Judg; but also that the Degree of Happiness or Misery, which Men shall be sentenc'd to in the next World, will be correspondent to the Degree of Good or Evil which they have done in this. This the Scripture plainly asserts, that good Men shall receive a Reward proportionable to the degree of their Holiness and Obedience, of their Service and Sufferings for God; and that the Torments of the Wicked shall be greater or less, according to the Degrees and Aggravations of their Sins. As for good Men, this seems intimated in those metaphorical Expressions us'd by the Prophet Daniel; Chap. 12. 3. *They that be wise, shall shine as the Brightness of the Firmament; and they that turn many to Righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever:* which is much the same with that the Apostle expressly affirms concerning the different Glory of the Saints at the Resurrection; 1 Cor. 15. 41. *There is one Glory of the Sun, another Glory of the Moon, and another Glory of the Stars; for one Star differeth from another Star in Glory: so also is the Resurrection of the Dead.* Mat. 5. 10. *And blessed are ye when Men shall revile you, and persecute you, and speak all Evil against you falsely for my Name-sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in Heaven;* intimating a more glorious Reward to those who suffer Persecution for Christ. So in Mat. 10. 41, 42. there is a Difference intimated between the Reward of a Prophet, and one only that is good in a private Capacity. So in the Parable of the Talents, Mat. 25. 14. & Luke 19. 15. every Man's Reward is according to the Improvement of his Talents: 1 Cor. 15. 58. *Be ye steadfast, unmovable,*

movable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord; forasmuch as you know that your Labour is not in vain in the Lord. But if our Reward should not hold a proportion to the degree of our Service, we should not have that Motive to be abundant in his Work and Service. The Apostle also, in 2 Cor. 9. 6. persuades the *Corinthians* from this Argument, to be very liberal and bountiful to their distressed Brethren, because *he which soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he who soweth plentifully, shall reap plentifully.* So he stirreth up the *Philippians* to Charity, Phil. 4. 17. (from hence) *Not because I desire a Gift, but I desire Fruit that may abound to your Account.*

It's likewise as plain from Scripture, that the Punishment and Torment of wicked Men shall be increas'd proportionably to the Degree and Aggravations of their Sins. Upon this account our Saviour threatens those that continue impenitent under the Gospel with more heavy and dreadful Punishment; and tells us, that in the Day of Judgment their Condition shall be worse than theirs of *Tyre and Sidon, of Sodom and Gomorrah, Mat. 11. 20, 21. & Mat. 24. 51.* The Portion of Hypocrites, he intimates, will be more severe than the Portion of other Sinners; and that according to the Degree of Light and Knowledg that Men sin against, so will be the Degree of their Torment: Luke 12. 47, 48. *The Servant that knew his Lord's Will, and did it not, shall be beaten with many Stripes; but he that knew it not, and committed things worthy of Stripes, shall be beaten with few Stripes.* Consider farther,

1. The Justice and Equity of the Divine Providence doth plainly require it, to give every one that which of due belongs to him, and that all should receive according to their Works.

2. Consider the Promises that God hath freely made to good Men for their Encouragement in Goodness, and the Assurance of their Performance, are founded in the Righteousness and Faithfulness of God, and the Merits of Christ, those Promises being *in him, Yea, and Amen;* 2 Cor. 1. 20.

3. This Benefit is clearly founded in the Reasonableness and Equity of the thing it self; it being very much for the Encouragement of Holiness and Goodness, to be assur'd that whatever we do for God now, or suffer for him,

him, will be fully rewarded hereafter. It also tends much to discountenance Sin, and to keep Men from running on to the height of Impiety, if they can be brought to believe, that by adding Iniquity to Transgression, they will make themselves ten times more the Children of Wrath, and treasure up the more Wrath for themselves against the Day of Wrath.

All that hath been said should be a mighty Argument to us to endeavour to grow in Grace, and from one Degree of Holiness and Obedience to another; firmly believing, that according to the Degree and Measure of our Service, Faithfulness, and Obedience, shall be the Degree of our Glory and Happiness. We serve a good Master, who will consider every thing we do for him. Let us then not content our selves with any low Degree of Grace and Obedience, seeing we have such a Prize in our View; let us shake off all Sloth and Negligence, and run with Patience (and great Care and Diligence) the Race that is set before us. And tho no Degree of Holiness can merit eternal Life and Happiness, yet greater Degrees of Holiness will (we see) certainly be rewarded with a larger Portion of Happiness. And tho God, antecedently to his Promise, is not bound to give so great a Reward to any Man merely for his Works, yet he hath promis'd to reward every Man according to his Works.

Let none therefore, tho he may (thro Grace) have some Grounds to hope, rest satisfy'd, in the lowest Measures of Grace, and say with *Esau*, I have enough, and desire no more: But let us labour to be adding one Degree of Grace to another, and to be pressing after a more compleat and perfect State of Holiness. We must not think to drive so near a Bargain with God in so advantageous a Matter, to desire no more Grace and Holiness than we think will secure our State in Happiness. He that cares not, tho he be least in the Kingdom of God, is not far from him that will be *totally* shut out. We should therefore labour to make our Calling and Election sure, to be working out our Souls farther Sanctification and Salvation in an holy Fear, lest we should come short of it; to be doing good in our several Spheres and Capacities, and to look to it, that we persevere in the ways of Truth and Holiness to the last, and grow more and more therein; that when the Day of Recompence shall come, we may

may have an abundant Entrance into, and Reward in eternal Glory.

C H A P. XXXVIII.

Of Hell, and the dreadful State of the Damned therein.

HAVING seen in the former Chapter there will be a Day of Judgment, and that the Judge will then judge the World in Righteousness: that there will be a twofold Sentence pronounc'd by him; of Absolution upon the Godly, Mat. 25. 34. *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you*; and of Condemnation upon the Wicked, Ver. 14. *Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels*: We come next to speak of the State of the Wicked, after the righteous Judge hath pronounc'd the Sentence of Condemnation upon them. And that we may come to a clearer and more distinct Knowledge of the State of the Damned, and what Hell is (of which our Saviour hath given us such solemn Warning, Mat. 10. 28. *Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him, who is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell*) Let us observe,

I. The several Expressions, by which the Scripture sets out this dreadful State.

(1.) It's call'd *Eternal Damnation*, Mark 3. 29. (2.) *The Damnation of Hell*, Mat. 23. 33. (3.) *A Place of Torment*, Luke 16. 28. (4.) *Wrath to come*, 1 Thess. 1. 10. (5.) *The Vengeance of eternal Fire*, Jude ver. 7. (6.) *Unquenchable Fire*, Luke 3. 17. (7.) *A Furnace of Fire*, Mat. 13. 42. in allusion (possibly) to the fiery Furnace of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. 3. 21, 22. (8.) *A Lake of Fire and Brimstone, and the second Death*, Rev. 21. 8. (9.) *Outer Darkness*, Mat. 22. 13. (10.) *Chains of Darknes*, 2 Pet. 2. 4. & Jude ver. 6. (11.) *Blackness of Darknes* for ever, Jud. v. 13. (12.) *A Prison*, 1 Pet. 3. 19. (13.) *Destruction*, Mat. 7. 13. (14.) *The Worm that never dieth*, Mark 9. 44. (15.) *Everlasting Fire*, Mat. 25. 41. (16.) *E-*
verlasting

everlasting Punishment, Mat. 25. 46. And these shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal.

These Scriptures plainly shew the different States of the Children of God, and of the Wicked after Death; a serious Consideration whereof should be the greatest Discouragement to Sin, and the most powerful Argument in the World to serious Piety and a holy Life.

Wicked Men themselves will easily admit, that the Righteous shall be eternally happy, but are loth to believe the eternal Punishment of the Wicked; but the Word of God doth most clearly and plainly prove it, and leaves not the least room for any to doubt of it. It says indeed, that the Wicked shall be destroy'd, and perish, and die; but by these Expressions we must understand the woful and miserable Estate of those that are rejected of God, and separated from him, who is the Fountain of all Felicity and Blessedness. But that Persons may still subsist, and be what in their own Nature they were before, and live the Life which consists in the vital Union of the Soul and Body, and in them undergo the Wrath of God for ever; the same Scripture manifestly proves: which says, *The Wicked shall be destroy'd, and perish*; and also says, *They shall be tormented with everlasting Pain and Misery.* Mat. 25. 41. *Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire* (and ver. 46. it's said, *They shall go away into everlasting Punishment*) *prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels.* And as that Fire is term'd everlasting, so that Everlastingness is describ'd as absolute, excluding all Limits and Determination, to which the whole Current of the Scriptures agree.

II. As the Damned shall always be continu'd in Life and Being, to endure the Torments due to their Sins, so the Justice of God will never fail to inflict those Torments upon them for their Sins; they shall be for ever excluded from the Favour of God, there being then no possible means left to obtain it. *As the Tree falleth, so it lieth.* And as no Person once receiv'd into the heavenly Mansions, shall ever be cast into outer Darkness; so certainly none, who are once cast into that Fire, prepar'd for the Devil and his Angels, shall ever enter into their Master's Joy. There is no Change to be wrought in the Person of any in those infernal Flames, no Sanctification of his Nature, no Justification of his Person, and there-

fore no Salvation for him. Without the Mediation of Christ, there's no entering into Heaven; and when he shall have deliver'd up the Kingdom unto God, even the Father, then shall the Office of the Mediator cease.

III. We come in the next place to consider the Dreadfulness of the infernal and everlasting Torments. They are set forth in Scripture (as was observ'd before) under sundry dreadful Notions, viz. by the *Worm that never dieth, and the Fire that never goeth out*; by a *Lake of Fire and Brimstone*, by *outer Darkness*, and *Blackness of Darkness for ever*. All which, and such other Expressions, being outwardly and sensibly dreadful, are made use of to set forth the inexpressible Fearfulness and Horror of that State: *But as Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man* (the natural Man) *to conceive what God hath prepar'd for those that love him*; so neither hath it, nor can it easily, by our finite Understandings, be conceiv'd what an infinitely just and holy God, whose Wrath is incens'd, and then unappeasable, hath prepar'd for them that hate him: the Misery of which woful State of the Damned, so as may be most intelligible to us, may be reduc'd to these four Heads:

1. They shall be tormented with the Pain of Loss, in being for ever banish'd from the Presence of God, and the Joys of Heaven; 2 *Theff. 1. 9. Being punish'd with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power*. And if in his Presence there is an Ocean of Blessedness, and Fulness of all Joys and Pleasures, which will be of an everlasting Continuance to his Saints and Servants, in their immediate Vision and Fruition of him; how dreadful must it needs be, to be for ever separated and banish'd from his Presence, and from the Glory of his Power, which will for ever exclude them from it.

2. They shall be for ever tormented also with the Pain of Sense, inflicted on them by the Wrath of God, and ever abiding on them, represented to us by a Lake of Fire. In this Life, if his Anger be but kindled a little, and a Spark of it fly into the Conscience, the poor Creature is at his Wit's end, and is not able to bear up before it: not only of the Wicked, but even of God's own Children, he is pleas'd to single out some, to whom he gives

a Taste, what the one should for ever have undergone, but that Christ underwent it for them; and of what the other must undergo for ever, if they continue in Impenitency. Such immediate Impressions and Representations of his Wrath have been made by him on their Souls, and to their Consciences, as have evidenc'd what kind of Torment it is, which, in the Fulness of it, is the Portion of the Wicked and Damned in Hell. See the Complaints of holy Job, Chap. 6. 2, 3, 4, 8—12. *The Arrows of the Almighty (says he) are within me, the Poison whereof drinks up my Spirit, the Terrors of God do set themselves in array against me. O that it would please God to destroy me, that he would loose his Hand, and cut me off.* And again, *Thou holdest me for thine Enemy, thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the Sins of my Youth:* and Chap. 16. 12, &c. *He also hath taken me by the Neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his Mark; he cleaveth my Reins asunder, and doth not spare, &c.* So also Heman, in his Complaint, Psal. 88. 7. *Thy Wrath lies hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy Waves:* the Waves of that immense Ocean of Wrath (to which he compares those Terrors in ver. 16, 17.) he says, they came over him continually, and overwhelm'd his Soul. And, ver. 14, 15, 16. he sets out his Condition as such, wherein there was not only a Privation of God's Favour, and that God seem'd to reject his Soul, as if he meant never more to look upon it or regard it, ver. 14. but positively, ver. 16. *Thy Terrors have cut me off, or the Terrors of thee; i. e. from thee efficiently, from thy Hand setting them on, and arising in me with dreadful Apprehensions and Thoughts of thy sore Displeasure, represented to my Soul by thee: these made his Spirit to fail, and made him not himself; Whilst I suffer thy Terrors, I am distracted.* For the Intention of a Soul, taken up with and extended by the Wrath of God, is such, and is wound up so high, as the String is ready to crack; the Terror of God in the Conscience, a Sense of his Wrath and Displeasure, makes it as a fiery Oven within it self. And as for wicked Men, even in this Life, when some Drops only of God's Wrath fall upon them, what Anguish do they cause in their Souls, as in the case of Judas? What made him to become his own Executioner? The Psalmist resolves us, Psal. 109. 18.

together with the Apottle's Application, *Acts* 1. 18, 20. it was the Curse or Wrath of God entering into his Soul. It's said, as he lov'd *Curſing*, that is *Sin*, which is that accursed thing before God; so the Curse of God came into his Bowels (or inwards) like Water and like Oil into his Bones, and filled all within him full of Anguish and Torment. But yet all this was but as the smallest Drops are to that Ocean of God's Wrath and Indignation, which will be pour'd out upon the Wicked for ever. All those Terrors which *Job* and *Heman*, and others of God's Children have endur'd from his Hand here in this Life, were yet in Love, abiding in God's Heart all this while towards them, and consistent with it; they were but the Chastenings of a Father for their Trial, and to make them Partakers more of his Grace and Holiness; Rods of Mercy's own gathering and making, the Stripes whereof are not so deep, but they may be and were soon heal'd again, *Job* 5. 18. They were Afflictions accompany'd and join'd with everlasting Kindness and Thoughts of Peace all the while, according to that, *Isa.* 54. 8. *In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting Kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.* So likewise the Terrors of bad Men in this Life, when they fall and sieze upon them in the greatest extremity, yet then they are, in comparison to what remains to them in Hell, but as the Sippings of the top of that Cup here, the Dregs whereof are reserv'd for them there to drink to the bottom; *Psal.* 75. 8. They are as the Overflowings of what is uppermost, which God promiscuously poureth forth both upon good and bad Men here in this Life. But, Oh! how dreadful then will the Condition of the Wicked be in Hell, when the full Vials of that Wrath shall be pour'd out upon them, without any Mixture and Allay, or Intermiſſion to all Eternity. How dreadful will their Portion be, against whom God stirreth up all his fierce Wrath? If what is here felt (how great soever it seemeth to Sense to be) is but as the Touch of God's little Finger, *Job* 1. 11. Oh then how great will that Vengeance be, which is pure Wrath, which is the fiery Indignation of Patience abus'd, boil'd up into Fury? What will those Rods be, which are of Revenge's making, whereby Vengeance and Justice will be satisfying themselves for ever in their deserv'd Damnation? As
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the Joys of Heaven cannot be inherited by Flesh and Blood, so neither can the Torments of the Fulness of this Wrath; but in Hell their Bodies shall be prepar'd and fitted for the enduring those scorching Flames, and everlasting Burnings of it. All the Terrors of Conscience here are, as is said of the Joys of the Saints, but the Earnest-Pence, in comparison to that great and immense Treasure of Wrath that is to come. The utmost that is threaten'd here, on the account of Sin, is, that *the Anger of the Lord shall smoke against the Sinner*, Deut. 29. 20. but in Hell it breaks forth into raging Flames of the fiercest Fire, of God's Wrath and Vengeance, that fill every Corner, and break out at all the Windows of the Soul; *Who knows the Power of his Anger?* Psal. 90. 11. If we cannot endure the Gripes of the Cholick, which here we sometimes feel, the Pains of the Stone, or a violent Tooth-ach, without much Impatience; how can we think of enduring the Pains and Torments of Hell, and those everlasting Burnings?

3. They shall be tormented also with the Worm of Conscience, with a cutting Reflection upon, and Remembrance of their former Enjoyments, and by-past Pleasures: Luke 16. 25. *Son, remember that thou in thy Life-time receiv'd'st thy good things.* When the Consciences of the Damned in Hell shall repeat over the Passages of their Lives past, and then set before them that precious time they wasted and mispent, the Opportunities of Grace they slighted, the Folly of their own Choice, their turning their Backs upon eternal Life and Salvation offer'd in the Gospel, their gross Neglect of their Souls, their eager Pursuit of sensual Satisfactions, their disregarding Admonitions, stifling Convictions, quenching the Motions of the Spirit of God, hating to be reform'd: Oh these will then be sad, most sad and woful Remembrances to them! If the Scourges of Conscience, which we meet with here, are too great a Price, for the short pleasure of a brutish Lust; then how much more will be the raging Pain which such Reflections as these will cause hereafter, with which they will be tormented Day and Night for ever?

4. As they will have a sharp Sense and Feeling of the Torments they endure, that unspeakable Anguish and scalding Heat of God's Wrath which they lie under, and

646 *Of Hell, and the dreadful State*

the bitter and tormenting Reflection that by their own Folly they have brought all that Misery upon themselves; so they will be tormented with the everlasting Horror of their Continuance under it, and Despair of ever coming out of it. They will then see they must abide for ever in this remediless Condition, under an everlasting Pain of Loss, because there is now no Hope of Heaven; and under an eternal Pain of Sense, because there is now no means to appease the Wrath of God, which abideth on them. And this Despair of ever coming out, is the very Hell of Hell it self. Oh dreadful Condition of damned Souls! 'tis for ever, for ever they must be tormented by that scalding Wrath that is now kindled against them. *Drexelius*, a learned Author, writing upon this Subject, hath this awakening Passage: "If God (*saith he*) "should speak thus to a damned Soul, Let the "whole World be fill'd with Sand from the Earth to the "Empyrean Heaven, and then let an Angel come every thousandth Year, and fetch only one Grain from that mighty sandy Mountain; and when that immeasurable Heap is so spent, and so many thousand Years expir'd, I will deliver thee out of Hell, and those extreme Torments: That most miserable forlorn Wretch, notwithstanding he were to lie thro that unconceivable Length of Time in those intolerable Hellish Torments, yet (upon such a Promise) would infinitely rejoice. But, alas! when all those Years are gone, there are Thousands of Thousands more to be endured, even thro all Eternity."

O sad and dreadful Condition! O Eternity! Eternity! Eternity! this Word [*for ever*] breaks the Heart. This is that heavy weight that so presseth the Damned, it hath no Limits, no Term, no Bounds at all; between a thing finite and what is infinite, there is no Comparison, no Proportion. O Lord! to depart from thee for ever, to lose the Sight and Fruition of thy pleas'd Countenance, to lie for ever under thy Wrath, to be hurl'd down among Devils and damn'd Fiends into a Lake of Fire and Brimstone, to be always burning, and yet never consum'd; ever dying, yet never dissolv'd; always gnaw'd upon by the Worm of Conscience, yet never devour'd; always gnashing the Teeth, weeping, howling, vexing, without any Glimpse of Hope, or one Drop of Comfort:

what

what Heart can think on these things, without splitting in pieces, and the greatest Astonishment? O Lord! whatever thou deniest me for this Life, whatever shall be my Lot and Portion here, yet deny me not (I humbly beseech thee) thy special Grace, the saving Influences of thy Holy Spirit, whereby I may be brought home to thee, and be enabled to work out my Salvation in thy Fear; that I may unfeignedly repent of all my Sins, and forsake them; and give up my self to thee, my blessed Saviour, that I may be justify'd and sanctify'd, and made Partaker of all those saving and blessed Benefits, which are the Purchase of thy most precious Blood; and thro thy infinite Grace and Mercy, be sav'd from this dreadful Wrath to come: *Amen*, O heavenly Father! for thy rich and infinite Mercy, and my blessed Saviour's sake.

I shall conclude what has been written on this awful Subject, with these following Meditations:

1. Let us consider how great, how inexcusable is the Folly and Stupidity of every wilful Sinner, that for the Satisfaction of his brutish Lusts, will run the hazard of these everlasting Torments! O did we look upon Sin with Scripture-Spectacles, we should find a greater Disproportion between the Pleasure and the Pain, that is inseparable annex'd to it, than between a Drop of Honey, and an Ocean of Gall. Methinks one serious Thought of eternal Torments should damp and stop any Sinner in his sinful Heat and Fury. What shall we for a short Pleasure, which lasts but a moment, be content to suffer an everlasting Punishment? Let us go into Hell by *Meditation*, that we may not go thither by Condemnation.

2. What Interest or Concernment have we in the whole World comparable to this, the making and securing our Peace with God? He is the severest Enemy, but the sweetest Friend; in his Favour is Life, but his Wrath and Displeasure is worse than Death. How should we speedily humble our selves for all our Sins, and fly to his Mercy in Christ for the Pardon of them: *The Wages of Sin is Death*. Nothing can bring us to those everlasting Flames, but *Sin* unrepented of; and nothing can save us from that never-dying Worm and miserable State, if we die in our Sins.

3. How highly should we prize the Love of Christ? How great a Value should we set upon his Blood? How

648 *Of Hell, and the dreadful State, &c.*

willingly should we embrace the Offers of Divine Grace, and Reconciliation, in and thro him? How readily and chearfully should we give up our selves to him, and to the Father by him; resolving, thro his Holy Spirit, to be his sincerely and unreservedly, seeing he laid down his own Life to deliver us from these everlasting Torments, and from that Wrath to come? to live in him as in our chiefest Good, and not in any of our Sins or Lusts, that are his greatest Enemies; and to live to him as our highest End and constant Interest, whose Glory should act and steer us in all our ways, and not to live unto our selves. The Sins of Men admit, in one respect, of a greater Aggravation than the Sin of Angels; in that these never sinned against the Offers of a Saviour, as Men do.

4. How readily should we do or suffer, perform or undergo any thing that our blessed Redeemer calls us to, who hath done and suffer'd so much for our sakes?

5. How should we pity and pluck back those who are posting towards the Pains of eternal Fire? We may (possibly) anger them thereby, but we had better endure some scalding Drops of their Wrath, than let them fall (if we can help it, by doing our Duty in faithfully admonishing them) into that Lake of Fire and Brimstone.

6. How should the Consideration of Eternity, and those everlasting Torments after Death, which are the Fruit and Wages of Sin, breed in every Heart a Fear and Awe of the Great God, and teach us to tremble at his Word, and his Threatnings therein denounc'd against all impenitent Sinners? How eagerly should we embrace that redoubled Advice of our blessed Saviour? *Luke 12.*

4, 5. And I say unto you, My Friends, be not afraid of them that kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do: But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear; fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into Hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him.

C H A P.

C H A P. XXXIX.

Of Heaven, and the blessed State of the Saints above.

HAVING treated before of the dreadful State and Condition of the Damned, we come now to speak of the Blessedness of the Righteous, those that die *in the Lord*; that is, in the Favour of God, in a State of Peace with him, being Members of Christ's mystical Body, and within the *Covenant of Grace*. When they die, their Souls are carry'd by Angels to Christ, and by him presented to God the Father, as the Fruit of his Purchase. So that they are presently blessed, upon the Departure of the Soul out of the Body; and shall be yet more blessed at the general Resurrection, when Soul and Body being re-united, the Judge shall set them at his Right Hand, and pronounce upon them this gracious Sentence, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepar'd for you from the Foundation of the World*; Mat. 25. 34. which done, *they shall go away into Life eternal*; as it is, ver. 46.

The Glory and Blessedness of which State, we come now to inquire into: but alas! how far must the Conceptions even of the best, whilst on this side the Vale, fall short and fail in the expressing of it, who only can hear thereof by the hearing of the Ear, and when our polluted Hands will leave on every thing they touch the Marks of their Uncleaness! There are two things wherein it consists:

I. In a total Removal of all Evils.

II. In a Confluence of all Good necessary to the Happiness of the Creature.

I. There will be a perfect Freedom from all the Evils that accompany'd us in our Passage thro this Valley of Tears, and which necessarily follow our Absence from the chief Good; (besides our Freedom from those everlasting Miseries which will be the Portion of the Wicked) There are three great Evils we labour under here. 1. The

Evil

Evil of Sin. 2. Of Temptation. 3. Of Affliction.

1. The Evil of *Sin*, the worst and most hateful of all Evils, shall be there cast out and excluded for ever. Sin is the great Evil the Children of God complain of with so much Sadness and Grief in this World: here *the Spirit lusts against the Flesh, and the Flesh against the Spirit*; and the best lament their Weakness, and the violent Assaults sometimes of spiritual Enemies. St. Paul himself breaks forth into a mournful Complaint of a *Law in his Members rebelling against the Law of his Mind*, and cries out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from this Body of Death!* And when harass'd by the Buffetings of Satan, he renews his most earnest Addresses to God to be freed from them. Here our Purity is not absolute, we must be always cleansing our selves from the Relicks of that deep Defilement that cleaves to our Nature. Our Peace here is preserv'd with the Sword in our hand, by a continual Warfare against the *Flesh, Satan, and the World*: but in Heaven it will be otherwise; there shall be no sinful Lust to war against the Soul, there entereth *nothing that defileth, or that worketh Abomination, or that maketh a lye*; there shall be no Blindness in the Mind, Perverseness in the Will, nor Disorder in the Affections; no Concupiscence in the Members, no Rebellion in the Flesh, no inherent Pollution remain: the old *Adam* is left in the Grave, never to rise more. The Saints in Heaven are Saints indeed; in this Life they are deliver'd from the Dominion of Sin, but there the very Being of it is abolish'd. Grace weakens Sin, but Glory quite abolisheth it. Our Corruptions, whilst here, (as the *Anakims*) may dismay us; and (as the *Canaanites* in *Israel*) will be left as Pricks in our Sides, and Thorns in our Eyes, and make our Lives a Burden to us: but in Heaven we shall be perfectly freed from them for ever. He that would wash his People with his *own Blood*, rather than suffer them to enter into Heaven with any Pollution or Defilement of Sin, will see that they be wholly cleans'd from all the Remainders of it: he hath undertaken to present them to his Father, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such thing, but perfectly holy and without blemish, and will certainly perform his Undertaking; for what Communion hath Light with Darkness, and what Fellowship hath Christ with *Belial*? If it

it were offer'd to the Choice of a sincere and serious Christian whilst here on Earth, he would rather chuse to be freed from Sin, than to be made Heir of all the World. Why let the Believer wait till he get to Heaven, and he shall have his Desire; this hard Heart, those vile Thoughts, which lie down and rise with us, and accompany us to and in every Duty, which we could no more leave behind us, than leave our selves behind us; shall be then left behind for ever: they may accompany us to Death, but they shall not proceed a step farther. No Pride or Passion, no Coldness of Affection to the things of God, or one another; no Ignorance or Error, which are so often withdrawing us from God, and inclining us to Backsliding from him; no uneven walking or grieving his Spirit, no sinful Action, or any unholy Conversation, shall ever enter there; but with our dying Breath we shall be separated from these for ever. Our Understandings will then receive their Light from the Face and Presence of God himself, whose Light will leave no Darkness in us, our Wills be correspondent fully and fixedly to the Divine Will, and that will be our Law and Rule from which we shall never swerve again, but shall be under an happy Impossibility of ever offending God more.

2. *The Evil of Temptation.* We shall then be deliver'd from all the Temptations of *Satan*, whereby he continually disturbs our Peace. The World is a place of Snares, a Valley of Temptations, the Devil's Circuit: how many Temptations are we assaulted with here continually, either from the Devil, the World, or our own corrupt Natures? In Paradise there was a Tempter, but there is none in Heaven, no Serpent can creep in there. What a grief is it to a Christian, tho he yield not to the Temptation, yet to be still solicited to Sin; that he can set about nothing that is good, but Satan is still dissuading him from it, distracting him in it, or discouraging him after it? What a Torment, as well as a Temptation is it, to have such horrid Motions made to his Soul? such vile and abominable Ideas presented to his Phantasy, such unbelieving and injurious Thoughts of God, of Christ, of the Scriptures, of Providence? and to be tempted sometimes to Atheism it self, and to deny the Lord that bought us, who made us, and redeem'd us, and whose Mercies

Mercies we are so continually experiencing, and drawing in with every Breath we take, and which are renewing to us every moment of our Lives, and that so many ways; and especially knowing the Treachery of our own Hearts, that they are as Tinder, ready to take fire as soon as one of those Sparks shall fall upon them? O how the poor Christian lives in Disquietness to feel these Motions! and the more, that his own Heart should be the Soil for this Seed, and the too fruitful Mother of such an Offspring: and most of all, thro Fear lest they will at last prevail, and these cursed Motions should procure his Consent. But here is our Comfort; as we now stand not by our own Strength, and shall not be charg'd with any of Satan's Suggestions, so when the Day of our Deliverance comes, we shall fully rest from these Temptations: Satan is then bound up, the time of tempting is then over, and the time of Torment to himself and his conquer'd Captives, those deluded Souls, is then come; and the victorious Saints shall triumph for ever in their Conquest over those Temptations. Now we walk among his Snares, and are in danger of being circumvented by them; but then we shall be for ever out of the reach of his subtle Wiles, and out of the hearing of any of his enticing Charms. He hath power here to tempt us in the Wilderness, as he did our blessed Lord before us, but he entrencheth not the holy City; he may set us on the Pinnacle of the Temple in the Earthly *Jerusalem*, but the New *Jerusalem* he may not approach. Perhaps he may bring us to an exceeding high Mountain, but the Mount *Sion*, and City of the living God, he cannot ascend; or if he should, yet all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, would be but a poor despis'd Bait to the Soul which is possess'd of the Kingdom of our Lord, and the Glory of it. No, no, there is no more work for Satan then: Hopes he might have of deceiving poor Creatures on Earth, who liv'd out of sight, and only heard and read of a Kingdom which they never beheld; that had only Faith to live upon, and were encompass'd with Flesh, and drawn aside by Sense: but when once they see the Glory they read of, and taste the Joys they heard of, and possess that Kingdom which they then believed and hoped for, having laid aside their fleshly Sense, it's time then for Satan to have done; it's in vain for him

him to offer a Temptation more, to draw them from that Glory they then behold, from the Arms of the sweet and blessed Saviour they are encompass'd in, from that blessed Society of Saints and Angels they are so much delighted with, and from the Bosom of the Father's Love; and that to a place of Torment amongst the damned Fiends which their Eyes behold: what Persuasions could ever possibly prevail to do it? We shall have no more need to pray, *Lead us not into Temptation*, nor to watch and pray that we enter not into it; but we shall have for ever under our feet those spiritual Enemies of our Souls. And those who have continu'd a short time here, with our blessed Lord, in Temptation, shall by him be appointed to a Kingdom, even as his Father appointed to him, Luke 22. 28, 29. *Blessed therefore are they who endure Temptation, for when they are try'd, they shall receive the Crown of Life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him*; Jam. 1. 12. We shall then rest also from all the Temptations we now meet with from the *World* and the *Flesh*, as well as Satan: and that is a Number unexpressible, and a Weight (were it not for supporting Grace) utterly intolerable. O the hourly Dangers that we poor Sinners walk in here below! Every Sense is now by Sin become a Snare; every Member, every Creature, even every Mercy, and every Duty, are a Snare to us. We can scarce open our Eyes, but we are in danger of being seduc'd by Objects sutable to our sensual Appetites and Inclinations. We can scarce hear a word spoken, but contains to us Matter of Temptation. How apt are we to seek our *selves*, to make our *Wills* our Law, and to bring all the Actions of others to the Bar of our incompetent Judgment; and to censure, slander, and murmur at their Proceedings? How impatient in Sicknes; and if in Health, how few and stupid are our Thoughts of Eternity? How sluggish and loitering in our Duties are we apt to be, or to turn from Christ by our presumptuous resting on them? and we our selves are the greatest Snares to our selves. But for ever blessed be Omnipotent Love, which saves us out of all these, and makes our Straits but the Advantages of the Glory of his saving Grace. In Heaven the Danger and Trouble is over; there is nothing but what will advance our Joy, and there we shall have an eternal Rest and

and Freedom from these Snares, and whatsoever by their means may be burdensom and annoying to us. As Satan hath no entrance there, so neither any thing to serve his Malice; but all things shall there with us conspire the Praises of our great Redeemer and Deliverer.

3. From the Evil of *Affliction* and *Sufferings* of every kind. In Heaven there is an absolute Freedom from all Misery, Pain, Labour, Want, or whatever else may be afflicting to us. All Sorrow is the Fruit of Sin; whatsoever is painful and burdensom to us here, is a Brand and Mark of our Rebellion against God: but in Heaven the Children of God shall enjoy perfect Freedom from it. As there is no Mixture of our Corruption with our Graces, so no Mixture of Sufferings with our Solace; Grief, Fear, Temptation, Sickness, Pain of Body, Anguish of Mind, shall then be heard of no more for ever: when the Saints are once past Death, they are past the Fear of any thing that is afflicting to them. There is none of those Waves in that Harbour, which now so toss us up and down: we have sometimes here Wine and Vinegar in the same Cup, and our pleasantest Food hath a Taste of the Gall; but there is none of these Mixtures in Heaven, there will be an universal perfecting of all our Parts and Powers, and an universal Removal of all our Evils. We shall then be deliver'd from all our perplexing Doubts and Fears of the Uprightness of our Hearts, the Sincerity of our Faith and Love, and of the Truth of all our Graces: tho such Doubts and Fears as these, whilst here, are found growing in the richest Ground, yet shall now be weeded out, and trouble the gracious Soul no more; the full Fruition of Love it self will now resolve these Doubts for ever. This kind of Language, which is sometimes heard in the mouth of a sincere, tho doubting Christian, in this State of Imperfection, where all our Graces are and will be so imperfect, will then be turn'd into another Tune; even into the Praises of him who hath forgiven, converted, sanctify'd and accepted, and glorify'd a Creature so unworthy. The Christian here is oft mourning under a Sense of God's Displeasure; *David* is here sometimes complaining, that *the Arrows of the Almighty stick in him*, that his *Sore runneth and ceaseth not*, that there is *no Soundness in his Flesh because of God's Displeasure*; now he saith, *I spake*

blessed State of the Saints above. 655

in my haste, and this was my Infirmity. But now, O blessed Day! when all these dolorous Complaints will be turn'd into admiring Thankfulness, and all the Sense of God's Displeasure swallow'd up in that Ocean of infinite and eternal Love! who tho for a little moment he hide his Face, yet with everlasting Compassion will then receive and embrace his People; *Isa. 54. 8.*

The Saints in Heaven will also be deliver'd there from all Abuses and Persecutions which they are liable to, and suffer from the hands of wicked Men. The Law is decreed, that *whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer Persecution*; and that they must be contented to be hated of all Men for the sake of Christ, and the Gospel: but then they that suffer'd with him, shall be also glorify'd with him, and he will be for ever admir'd in them; when the Prayers of those holy Souls under the Altar will be fully answer'd, and God will *avenge the Blood of his suffering and persecuted Servants on those that dwell on the Earth*, *Rev. 6. 10.* They had perhaps good Words and goodly Pretences for their Malice and Violence; *Isa. 66. 5. Your Brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my Name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorify'd; but he shall appear to the Joy of his People, and they shall be ashamed.*

We shall also rest from all our sad Divisions: How lovingly do thousands live together in Heaven, being knit together in the Bands of the most fervent Love and Affection! who lived not here in so sweet a Friendship and Familiarity, thro Ignorance and Corruption. *Paul and Barnabas* are now fully reconcil'd; *Lutherus cum Zuinglio optime jam convenit.* Those Friends who now look strangely at us, will at that blessed Meeting, when we and they are perfectly sanctify'd, joyfully triumph with us in our common Rest. We shall also be freed from all our personal Sufferings, whether natural and ordinary, or more immediately from the afflicting Hand of God. There are so many natural Calamities, so many casual, whilst here in this World, which no human Mind can foresee, and much less prevent; that might well make the Thoughts of Heaven delightful to us, where all those Evils that by their Number, Variety, or Weight, disquiet and oppress us here, are at an end. All Creatures have an enmity against us, ever since we made

made the Lord of all our Enemy. And tho we are reconcil'd by the Blood of the Covenant, and the Price is paid for our full Deliverance; yet our Redeemer sees it fit to leave this measure of Misery upon us, to make us know for what we are beholden to his Grace, and mind us of what we would else forget; as well as to be serviceable to his wise and gracious Designs, and to be advantageous to our full and final Recovery. As all our Senses are the Inlets of Sin, so they are become the Inlets of our Sorrow. Grief here creeps in at our Eyes, at our Ears, and almost every where; it seizeth on our Heads, our Hearts, our Flesh, our Spirits, and what part can escape it? What brittle Glasses are these Bodies that we bear about us? And how many thousand Dangers are they hurry'd thro, and what multitudes of Diseases are they continually liable to? every Member of them, even the least, being a fit Subject for Pain, and ready to communicate that Pain to every Part, and make the Whole a Sharer in it. What would not they, who have sometimes been under those tormenting Pains of the Stone or Gout, and other such acute Distempers, part with, to be for ever freed from the Torment of them? but to be assur'd of this while in this mouldering dying Body, is impossible: for Sin, and Flesh, and Grief, and Pain, will all be left behind together. But O the blessed Tranquillity of that Place and State of the Saints above! where there is nothing but sweet and constant Peace and Joy, without any intermission: our Lives will be but one Joy, as our Time will be chang'd into one Eternity; our Groans and Sighs will all be done away, and *God will wipe away all Tears from our Eyes, Rev. 7. 15, 16, 17.* No more parting of Friends asunder, nor Disproportion in our Friendship; no Trouble accompanying our Relations, nor Voice of Lamentation heard in our Dwellings. What room can there be for any Evil, where the whole is perfectly fill'd with God? *Then shall the Ransomed of the Lord return, and come to Sion with Songs, and everlasting Joy, upon their heads: they shall obtain Joy and Gladness, and Sorrow and Sighing shall flee away; Isa. 35. 10.* Hold out then a little longer, O my Soul; bear with the Infirmities of thy earthly Tabernacle; endure that share of Sorrows, that the Love of thy Father shall see needful for thee to impose, and because thou hast
sinned

finned against him: It will be thus but a little while, before thou shalt have a compleat and full Deliverance. And,

Lastly, We shall rest from all those sad Affections which necessarily accompany our Absence from God, who is the only Center of our Rest. The Trouble that now is mix'd in our Desires and Hopes, our Longings and Waitings, shall then cease; we shall no more lament the Hidings of his Face, whose Love and Pavour we so much desire and prize: but all the Duties of a Child of God, and Breathings of their Souls in their Requests on this account at the Throne of Grace, will all conclude in a most full and blessed Fruition and Enjoyment of him. For God shall wipe away all Tears from our Eyes, and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain, for the former things are passed away.

II. A Second Thing wherein the Blessedness of Heaven consists, is, in a Confluence of all Good, necessary to the Happiness of the Creature. The Saints in Heaven will be blessed;

1. In their Bodies. The Lord Jesus Christ will, at the Day of Judgment, raise these vile Bodies, and change them into the Likeness of his own glorious Body, Phil. 3. 20, 21. The Bodies of the Saints are the Members of Christ, and no Member of his shall remain in Death: they are the Temples of the Holy Ghost, and therefore shall be rais'd again, Rom. 8. 11. The Bodies of Saints, when dead, are not separated from Christ; and therefore are said to be dead in Christ, to sleep in Jesus, 1 Thess. 4. 14. and by virtue of their Union to Christ their Head, they shall be rais'd and chang'd into the Likeness of his own glorious Body. That Day being to be the great Solemnization of the Marriage between Christ and his Saints, he will endow their Bodies with glorious Qualities, as well as their Souls; for he assum'd, and suffer'd in them, dy'd for them, and will therefore then glorify them together.

(1.) They shall be made incorruptible; They are sown in Corruption, but shall be rais'd in Incorruption. They now yield to the Decays of Nature, and are exercis'd sometimes with tormenting Pains and Aches; but then they shall be clothed with Immortality, and shall be

always in the Spring of Youth, and be for ever freed from all those Distempers that have been here so grievous and afflicting to them.

(2.) *Tho they are sown in Dishonour, they shall be raised in Glory.* All Deformities and Defects (which are the Fruit of Sin) shall be remov'd; *The Righteous shall shine as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, Mat. 13. 43.* If Moses's Face, by conversing with God but forty Days, did shine so exceedingly, that they were glad to put a Veil upon it; how glorious shall our Bodies be, when we shall be ever with the Lord? If Christ in the Mount, when he was transfigur'd, Mat. 17. 2. *His Face did shine as the Sun, and his Raiment was white as Snow,* that the Apostles were not able to bear the sight of the Glory there manifested (and yet that was but a Glimpse of that Glory he hath now in Heaven;) we may guess a little thereby at the Glory of the Bodies of the Children of God, when they shall be made like to the glorious Body of Christ there.

(3.) They shall be made *spiritual Bodies*, for *Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; They are now natural Bodies, but shall be raised spiritual Bodies.* When we come to Heaven, that World of Spirits, even our Bodies shall be spiritual, for Qualities, tho not for Substance. They shall have no need of Meat, Drink, &c. as these Bodies have; but will be as the Angels, in respect thereof: they will not be clogg'd as now, but move with great Agility; and being spiritual Bodies, will then be more fitted and dispos'd for spiritual Uses and Employments.

(4.) Our Bodies will then be made *powerful Bodies*; they are *sown in Weakness, but shall rise in Power.* The Power and Strength that glorify'd Bodies shall have, will be wonderful. In this Life the Eye is dazzled at the Brightness of the Sun, but then it will be strengthen'd to behold those Sights and Objects that are far more glorious, and not be dazzled at them; and shall be enabled and strengthen'd, by the Divine Almighty Power, to bear that exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory that shall be prepar'd for them. This is one thing that makes the Joys in Heaven so great, a right Disposition thereto, by the highest degree of Perfection both of Soul and Body. Here Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nei-

ther

ther hath it enter'd in the Heart of Man on Earth to conceive, what God hath laid up for his People that wait for him; for this Eye of Flesh is not capable of seeing it, nor this Ear of hearing it, nor this Heart of understanding it: but there they are made capable of it, God will there, as a special part of his Saints Happiness, make them intirely perfect both in Soul and Body, and qualify them thereby to enjoy the Glory, and throughly to partake of the Sweetness of that Condition they are brought into. If Grace make a Christian differ so much from what he was, how much more will Glory make us differ? As much as a Body spiritual, above the Sun in Glory, exceeds these frail, noisom, diseas'd Lumps of Flesh, or Dirt that now we carry about us; so far shall our Senses then exceed these we now possess: and as God advances our Senses, and enlargeth our Capacity, so will he advance the Happiness of those Senses, and fill up with himself all that Capacity. As the whole Man hath shar'd here on Earth in Obedience and Sufferings, so shall it also do in the Blessedness procur'd for it; and as Christ bought the whole Man, so also shall the whole partake of the everlasting Benefits of that Purchase. As their Eyes and Hearts shall be fill'd with the Knowledge of God, with his Glory, and with his Love; so shall their Mouths be filled with his Praises: it shall be the everlasting Work of those blessed Saints, to stand before the Throne of God, and the Lamb, and to praise him for ever and ever.

(5.) Unto all these glorious Perfections and Endowments before-mention'd, may be added the great Privilege and Happiness we shall then have, to behold with our bodily Eyes our blessed Saviour in his Humanity. This, *Job* plainly testifies, *Job 19. 25. For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth; and tho after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for my self, and my Eyes shall behold, and not another, &c.* The light of whom, is the next Object to the Beatific Vision, and must needs therefore add very much to our Happiness; for the Fulness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily, and doth as it were radiate through the glorify'd Body of Christ. Both the Eminency of, and our Interest in this Object, must needs make it very

ravishing and delightful to us; not only the Sight of Christ in Glory, but in Glory as our Redemer. As much of the Creator as can be possibly visible in the Nature of Man, will then be manifested in Christ; and therefore as much Delight and Satisfaction as the Creature can be made partaker of, by the beholding and sight of any visible Object, will be the Portion of all those that shall for ever behold him.

2. The Saints shall be blessed in their *Souls*. And if the Body shall be thus employ'd, O how shall the Soul be taken up? As its Powers and Capacities are greatest, so its Actions strongest, and its Enjoyments sweetest. And as the bodily Senses have their proper Aptitude and Action, whereby they receive and enjoy their Objects; so doth the Soul in its acting enjoy its own Object, by knowing, thinking, and remembring, by loving, and by delightful rejoicing: this is the Soul's enjoying; by these Eyes of the Mind, spiritually enlighten'd, it sees; and by these Arms it embraceth. If it might be said of the Disciples of Christ on Earth, much more of those that behold him in his Glory; *Blessed are the Eyes that see the things that you see, and the Ears that hear the things that you hear, &c.* Mat. 13. 16, 17.

Knowledge of it self is very desirable: How noble a Faculty of the Soul is the *Understanding*? It can compass the Earth, and measure the Heavens: but this is the top of its Excellency, it can know God who is infinite, who made these, and all Creatures contain'd in them, a little here, but more and much more hereafter. The Understanding being then enlarg'd and widen'd, it shall clearly see the most excellent Objects; it shall have a right Knowledge, a clear Sight and Vision of the blessed God. *Now we see thro a Glass darkly, 1 Cor. 13. 12. but then face to face; now we know but in part, but then we shall know even as we are known.* Our Knowledge of God now is very imperfect, but then *we shall see him as he is, 1 John 3. 2.* Here the naked Beauty of divine things is veil'd, and impossible to be discover'd; the Mind is not proportionable to sustain that dazzling Brightness, but *when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* The Manifestation of the Objects shall abundantly exceed the clearest revealing of them here, and the Understanding shall be prepar'd in proportion,

portion, to take a full View of them. God is pleas'd to condescend to our Capacity here, and to adapt the Expressions of his Majesty to the Narrowness of our Imaginations; but in Heaven the Revelation of the Deity is much more glorious, and the Mind is clarify'd from those terrene Images that flow thro' the gross Channels of the Senses. In this present State, our purest Conceptions of God are mix'd with Dross, and very imperfect; but there the Gold shall be separated from the Dross, and our Conceptions be more proper and becoming the Simplicity and infinite Purity of the most holy God. The sensible Faculties shall then be rais'd and refin'd, and made the Subjects of unspotted Purity and Glory. When the Divine Light shall shine with direct and radiant Beams, and the thick Curtain of Flesh is spiritualiz'd and transparent, the Soul will then enjoy the clearest and most uninterrupted Vision of God.

2. The *Will* shall then be perfected with absolute and indefectible Holiness: that Imperfection and Unevenness that is here in the best of the Saints on Earth, shall then be taken away, and the Will shall be brought into an exact Conformity to the Will of God, and perfect Freedom from all *Servitude to Sin*. And,

3. The *Memory* doubtless will not be idle or useless in this blessed Work; if it be but by looking back, to help the Soul to value its Enjoyments. Our Knowledg being enlarg'd, and not diminish'd, therefore the Knowledg of things past shall not be taken away. Doubtless from that Height, the Saint can look behind him and before him; and to compare past with present things, must needs raise in the blessed Soul an unconceivable Esteem and Sense of its Condition. To stand on that Mount whence we can see the *Wilderness* and *Canaan* both at once; to stand in Heaven, and to look back on Earth, and weigh them together in the Ballance of a clear and unerring Sense and Judgment; how must it needs transport the Soul, and make it cry out, O blessed Price, and thrice blessed Love and Condescension, that hath procur'd and purchas'd all this for me! O happy End of believing, and of the Holy Spirit's working! Have the Gales of Grace blown me into such an Harbour? Is it hither my blessed Redeemer hath entic'd my Soul? O blessed Way, and thrice blessed End! How far beyond Conception, whilst

I was clothed with Flesh? Is this the Glory which the Scripture spoke of, and Ministers preach'd of? Why, now I see the Gospel indeed is good Tidings, even Tidings of Peace and good things, Tidings of great Joy to all Nations! O happy End of all my Mourning, Fasting, Humblings, and heavy Walking, and of all my Afflictions; of the World's Scorns, and Satan's Temptations. 'Tis true, a stedfast Faith here in the Providence of God, that all that he doth, and all that he permits and disposeth is best, will quiet our Passions, and change the tempestuous Ocean into the pacifick Sea; but when we shall be once admitted into that blessed Council above, and see the immediate Reasons of the Divine Decrees, what a heavenly Wonder, what an exquisite Pleasure will result from thence, and fill our Minds? When the original Fountains of Wisdom, as clear as deep, shall be open'd, what sweet Satisfaction shall be shed abroad in our Spirits? Then we shall see the Beauty of Divine Providence more conspicuous, in disposing temporal Evils in order to our eternal Felicity; that as in a curious Picture, the darkeſt Shadows are ſo diſpos'd as to give Life and Grace to the orient Colours; ſo all the Afflictions of this State were but Shadows or Foils, to make the Faith, Love, and Patience of the Servants of God more reſplendent, and their Reward more excellent. What our Saviour ſaid to St. Peter, is applicable to the impetrable Diſpenſations of Providence to us in our mortal State; *What I do, thou knoweſt not now, but ſhalt know hereafter.* Then the Secrets of the Divine Counſels ſhall be unſeal'd, and we ſhall be able to expound that perplexing Riddle, how, *out of the Eaſter came Meat, and out of the Strong came Sweetneſs.* We ſhall underſtand that his over-ruling Providence is moſt eminently glorify'd, in extracting Good out of Evil. And if there be ſuch a thing as *Indignation* left, how will it here exert and ſhew it ſelf? O vile Nature, that reſiſted ſo much and ſo long ſuch a Bleſſing! Unworthy Soul! is this the place thou cameſt ſo unwillingly towards? Was Duty wearieſom? Was the World too good to loſe? Didſt thou ſtick at leaving all, denying all, and ſuffering any thing, for this? O falſe and filthy Heart and Fleſh, that had almoſt by this means betray'd me to eternal Flames, and loſt me all this Glory! Why art thou not aſham'd,

O my Soul, that ever thou didst question that Love that hath brought thee hither; that thou wast ever jealous of the Faithfulness of thy Lord, misinterpreting of and grudging at those Providences, and repining at those Ways, that have such an End? And didst not live continually transported with thy Saviour's Love? Now thou art sufficiently convince'd, thy bitterest Cup was needful, and that thy Lord had sweeter Ends, and meant thee better than thou wouldst believe; and that thy Redeemer was saving thee, as well when he cross'd thy sensual Appetite and Desires, as when he granted them: no thanks, but shame to thy unworthy self, for what I now receive, but to *Jehovah* and the *Lamb* be Glory for ever. Thus as the Memory of the Wicked will eternally promote their Torment, to look back on the transitory Pleasures they enjoy'd, the Sins committed, the Grace refus'd, Christ neglected, and Time then remedilessly lost; so will the Memory of the Saints for ever promote their Joys, and the Remembrance of their former Sorrows add Life to their present Satisfaction and Felicity.

4. The *Affections* shall be set right by an unalterable Regularity. And O how full and sweet Enjoyment will the Affections of Love and Joy afford! There will be a constant cleaving of the Heart to God, a constant loving of him without Satiety or Weariness, who is *Love* it self. Here are many startings aside to the Creature, but in Heaven there will be an eternal fixed Delight and Complacency in God. The acting of this Affection wheresoever carries much delight along with it, especially where the Object appears deserving, and the Affection strong. But O what will it be, when perfect Affections shall have the strongest, perfect, and incessant Acting, upon the most perfect Object, the ever-blessed God? Here the poor Soul complains, O that I could love Christ more! but I cannot, alas! I cannot. Ay, but then thou canst not chuse but love him; I had almost said, forbear if thou canst. Now thou knowest little in comparison of his Amiability, and therefore lovest little; but then thine Eye will affect thy Heart, and the continual viewing of that perfect Beauty, will keep thee in continual Ravishments of Love. Now thy Salvation is not perfected, nor all the Mercies purchas'd by thy dear Redeemer; yet given in,

but when the top Stone is set on, thou shalt then with Shouting and an holy Triumph, cry *Grace! Grace!* Thy Sanctification is imperfect, and thy Pardon and Sense thereof not so compleat as then it shall be, and therefore thou lovest the less: but when thou knowest how much is forgiven, and how much bestow'd, thou wilt love more. Doth it now stir up our Love, to remember all the Experiences of his Love? To look back upon a Life of Mercies, doth not Kindness melt us, and the Sun-shine of Divine Goodness warm our frozen Hearts? What will it do then, when we shall live in Love, and have *All* in him, who is *All*? *While we are here in the Body, we are absent from the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 6.* but then the Soul will enjoy a full, immediate, and uninterrupted Communion with God, and Fruition of him, who is the God of Love. And O the high Delights of Love, of this Love! the Content that the Heart finds in it! the Satisfaction it brings along with it! Surely Love is both Work and Wages. And if this were all, what a high Favour were it, that God will give us leave to love him, that he will vouchsafe to be embrac'd by such Arms as have embrac'd Lust and Sin before him! But this is not all: he returneth Love for Love; nay, a thousand times more. As perfect as we shall be then, yet we cannot reach his Measure of Love. Thy holy Soul will be then brim-full of Love; and yet love as much as thou canst, thou shalt be ten thousand times more beloved by him who is Love it self. Were the Arms of the Son of God open for thee upon the Cross, and an open Passage made to his Heart by the Spear on thy account; and will not his Arms and Heart be open to thee in Glory? Did he love thee an Enemy, a Sinner, when thou loathedst thy self; and will he not now unmeasurably love thee, a Son, a Saint, who art now perfectly conform'd to him, and bear'st his Image, and now returnest some Love for Love again? As the Pains of Hell will convince the rebellious Sinner of God's Wrath, who would never before believe it; so the Joys of Heaven will convince thee thoroughly of that Love, which thou wouldst so hardly be persuaded of. Is the Spouse of Christ, while black, yet by her loving Lord accounted comely? Is she his Love, his Dove, his Undeiled? Doth she ravish his Heart with one of her Eyes?

Eyes? Is her Love better than Wine? O believing Soul, study a little and tell me, what is the Harvest which these First-Fruits foretel, and the Greatness of that Love which these are but the Earnest of? Here, O here is the Heaven of Heaven! This is the Saints Fruition of God! In these sweet, mutual, constant Actings and Embracements of Love, doth it consist. To love, and to be loved; these are the *everlasting Arms that are underneath*, Deut. 33. 27. His Left Hand is under their Heads, and with his Right Hand doth he for ever embrace them. Believe this for thy comfort here, O believing Soul, and think of it, till thy Eye of Faith affect thy Heart, and draw out more of this sweet Affection of Love to him that died for thee; thou shalt then be the Son, the Spouse, the Love, the Delight of the King of Glory, and be eternally embrac'd in the Arms of his Love, which was from everlasting, and will extend to everlasting.

The Affection also of Joy hath not the least share in this Fruition; it's that which all the rest lead to and conclude in, even the unconceivable Complacency which the Blessed feel in their seeing, knowing, loving, and being beloved of God. The Delight of the Senses here cannot be known by Expressions, as they are felt; how much less then this Joy! This is the *white Stone*, which none knoweth, but he that *receiveth* it. And if there be any Joy which the Stranger meddleth not with, then surely this, above all, is it. All Christ's ways of Mercy tend to and end in the Saints Joys. All the Sufferings he underwent here, were, that they might rejoice; he sendeth the Spirit to be their Comforter, has multiply'd his gracious Promises, and made such a Discovery of their future Happiness which he purchas'd for them, that their Joy may be *full*. He aboundeth in Mercies towards them of so many kinds for this end; he maketh them lie down in green Pastures, and leadeth them by the still Waters; yea, he openeth to them the Fountain of living Waters, that they may thirst no more, and that it may spring up in them to everlasting Life: yea, he causeth them to suffer, that he may cause them to rejoice, and chasteneth them, that he may give them Rest; and maketh them (as he did himself) *to drink of the Brook in the way, that they may lift up the head*, Plal. 110. 7. And lest, after all this,

this, they should neglect their own Comforts, he maketh it their Duty, and presseth it on them; commanding them to *rejoice in him alway, and again to rejoice.* And he never brings them into so low a Condition, wherein he leaves them not more cause of Joy than Sorrow. And hath the Lord such a care of our Comfort here, where the Bridegroom being from us, we must mourn? Oh what will that Joy then be, where the Soul being perfectly prepar'd for Joy, and Joy prepar'd by Christ for the Soul, it shall be our Work, our Business eternally to *rejoice!* The Joy and Happiness of the Saints seems to exceed the Damned's Torments, they being but the Torments of Creatures; but our Joy will be *the Joy of our Lord* we shall then enter into; *John 17. 22. Rev. 3. 21.* The Joy of Believers, that have spent their Days in sighing, and mingled their Bread with Tears of Sorrow, under the Sense of their Sins, because they have griev'd their dearest Lord, shall then be fill'd with Joy as much as they can hold, and more than ever they could think on, or their Hearts desire. As the Joy of the Hypocrite, so the Fears of the Upright are but for a moment; which when they die, vanish; and they awake in joyful Glory; for God's *Anger endureth but for a moment.* In his Favour is Life; *Weeping may endure for a Night* (Darkness and Sadness go together) *but Joy cometh in the Morning.* *Psal. 50. 5.* And how great will that Joy be, when the Saint's actual Possession shall convince him of his Title, and he shall be in Heaven before he is well aware; when he shall be by the Angels brought to Christ, and when Christ shall (as it were) take him by the Hand, and lead him into his purchas'd Possession, and bid him welcome to his Rest, and present him unspotted before his Father; and place him about his glorious Throne, *in whose Presence there is, and will be, to eternal Ages, continual Springs, and Fulness of Joy, and at whose right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore;* *Psal. 16. 11.*

And as this Joy will be infinitely compleat and full, so it will be *main*. As there is Joy in Heaven at our Conversion, how much then at our Glorification? *Luke 15. 10.* How will the blessed Saints welcome us and rejoice at our Coming thither, who are themselves already glorify'd? Our old Friends and Acquaintance, with whom we have here taken sweet Counsel together, and have pray'd,

pray'd, suffer'd, and familiarly convers'd together? How will the holy *Angels* welcome us, and congratulate our safe Arrival, who delight so much in the good of Men? When Man was created, those *Morning-Stars* sang together, and those *Sons of God* shouted for Joy, Job 38. 7. When Christ came to redeem Man, an *heavenly Host* of them praised God, Luke 2. 13. How much more will they then rejoice when we come to be glorify'd? How will our Redeemer welcome us, how joyful will he be to receive us, having now accomplish'd the End of his Undertaking, and of what he hath done and suffer'd on our behalf, when he shall be glorify'd in his Saints, and admir'd in all them that believe? Yea, the Father himself is said to rejoice in our Joy: As his Spirit is griev'd, and he is said to be weary with our Iniquities; so he rejoiceth in our Good. How will he then also welcome us, with *Well done, good and faithful Servants, enter into your Master's Joy?* How quickly doth he here espy a returning *Prodigal* even afar off? How doth he run and meet him? and with what Compassion falleth he on his Neck, and kisseth him, and putteth on him the best Robe, and a Ring on his Hand, and Shoes on his Feet, and spareth not to kill the *fatted Calf*, that they may eat and be merry? How exceeding then will be the Joy of that last and great Meeting, when the Believer shall be receiv'd into the everlasting Embracements of the Father's Love? As he appointed a Sabbath of Rest after his Work of Creation, seeing all good and very good; what an eternal Sabbathism then will be kept, when the Work of Redemption, Sanctification, Preservation, and Glorification are all finish'd, and his Work more perfect than ever, and very good indeed? So the Lord is said to rejoice, and take pleasure in his People, Psal. 147. 11. & 149. 4. How might those words be wrote in Letters of Gold, Zeph. 3. 17. *The Lord thy God, in the midst of thee, is mighty: He will save, he will rejoice over thee with Joy; he will rest in his Love, he will joy over thee with Singing.* Oh well may we then rejoice in our God with Joy and Singing, and rest in our Love and Joy in him! See *Isa.* 65. 18, 19. And how should we be ever admiring the Greatness of that Love the Father hath bestow'd upon us, that we should be call'd the *Sons of God*? 1 John 3. 1. and that we should enter with him into his own eternal Rest!

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This also will be a comfortable Adjunct to all that Happiness which will be the Portion of God's People in Heaven, the Fellowship of the blessed Saints and Angels of God for ever. Tho' this Happiness is proper to the Saints only, yet it is common to all the Saints; for what is it but an Association of blessed Spirits in God? A Corporation of perfected Saints, whereof Christ is the Head? The Communion of Saints compleated? Nor doth these make those Joys to be therefore mediate, and deriv'd by Creatures to us, as here; for all the Lines may be drawn from the Center, and not from each other, and yet their Collocation make them more comely than one alone could be; tho' the Strings receive not their Sound and Sweetness from each other, yet their Concurrence causeth that Harmony which could not be by one alone. We may then truly say, as *David*, *I am a Companion of all them that fear thee*; when we are come to Mount Zion, and to the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels; to the General Assembly and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the Blood of Sprinkling. We are come thither already in respect of Title, and of Earnest, and First-Fruits; but we shall then come into the full possession. And if it be a Happiness to live with the Saints in their Imperfection, when they have Sin to embitter, as well as Holiness to sweeten their Society, what will it be to live with them in their perfection, when Saints are wholly and only Saints? For those who have pray'd, and fasted, and mourn'd together, now to joy, and enjoy, and praise together, how much will that advance their Pleasure? However it may be upon the great Change that will be upon our Natures perfected, at certainly would, according to the present Temperature of the most sanctify'd human Affections, affect exceedingly. If the fore-thought of sitting down with *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God, is what we may now lawfully rejoice in; then how much more that real Sight and actual Possession? To join with *Moses* in his Song, with *David* in his Psalms of Praise, and with all the Redeemed in the Song of the Lamb for ever. To be join'd to that blessed Society, to

ſee Enoch, Noah, Joſeph, Job, Hezekiah, the Apoſtles, and all the Saints which have liv'd in the World, now enjoying the End of their Faith, Patience, Uprightneſs, and holy walking; how will it conduce to the compleating of our Comforts, when we ſhall depart out of this Cloud and Sink of Sin and Vanity, to go to that Society and Council of holy Souls, and to have our Abode eternally with them? It's Chriſt indeed is *All in All*, and it is the *Preſence* of God maketh Heaven to be Heaven; but yet it muſt needs ſtill farther ſweeten the Thoughts of that Place to us, when we remember, there are ſuch a multitude of our moſt dear and precious Friends in Chriſt, with whom we took ſweet Council, and with whom we went up to the Houſe of God, who walk'd with us here in the Fear of God, and in the Integrity of their Hearts, in the face of whoſe Conſervations was written the Name of Chriſt, whoſe ſweet and ſenſible mention of his Excellencies hath made our Hearts to burn within us. To think thoſe faithful Friends, that are gone before us, will be again our Companions there; that thoſe with whom we were wont to enquire, diſcourſe, and hear of Heaven together, ſhall then live in Heaven together; that we who were wont to complain and open our Doubts to one another, and our Fears, whether ever we ſhould come there or no, ſhall then rejoice with one another, and triumph over thoſe Doubts and Fears for ever. When we ſhall join together in our Praises, and be one in Chriſt, even as he and the Father are one, and whom, in ſubordination to himſelf, as he hath commanded us to love them now, he will give us leave to love and delight in them, when himſelf hath made them much more lovely. It's a Queſtion with ſome, whether we ſhall know each other in Heaven or no? Surely, there ſhall no Knowledge ceaſe which now we have, but only that which implieth Imperfection; nay, our preſent Knowledge ſhall be increas'd beyond Belief: It will indeed be done away, but that will be as the Light of Candles and Stars is done away by the riſing of the Sun; which is more properly a doing away of our Ignorance than of our Knowledge: for now the beſt know but in part, and therefore can inſtruct and help each other but in part; but then we ſhall with them make up one perfect Man, and know as we are then known. Nor is it only

only our old Acquaintance (probably) whom we knew here, that we shall know again; but those whom we never knew before, all the Saints in all Ages, whose Faces in the Flesh we never saw, whom we shall there both know and delightfully enjoy; as in the Transfiguration, Peter knew Moses and Elias, dead many hundred years before. In like manner, it's very probable we shall then know one another, and even our Parents, Wives, Children, and all our Christian Friends, &c. much more perfectly than we could do here while in this imperfect State; yea, and the Angels then, as well as Saints, will be our blessed Acquaintance and sweet Associates. Those who now are willingly ministering Spirits for our good, will willingly then be our Companions in Joy, for the perfecting of our Good; and they who had such Joy in Heaven for our Conversion, as was before observ'd, will gladly rejoice with us in our Glorification; being then made Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God, Eph. 2. 19.

But that which is the most excellent Property of this State of the Saints in Heaven, is, that the Joys of it are immediately from God: as all Good whatsoever is compris'd in God, and all in the Creature are but Drops from this Ocean; so all the Glory of the Blessed is compris'd in their Enjoyment of God himself, and all mediate Joys, even in that place of inexpressible Bliss and Joy, are but Drops from it. If Men and Angels should study to speak the Blessedness of that State, what can they say beyond this, that it is the nearest Enjoyment of the infinitely blessed God? Say they have God, and then say they have all that's worth the having. O the Fulness of Joy offer'd to a Believer in that one Sentence of Christ's! Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold the Glory which thou hast given me; John 17. 24. If the Queen of Sheba thought those happy that beheld and heard the Wisdom of Solomon, and saw his Glory, then sure they that stand continually before God, and see his Glory, and the Glory of the Lamb, are far more happy. To them will Christ give to eat of the Tree of Life, that is in the midst of the Paradise of God, Rev. 2. 7. And to eat of the hidden Manna, ver. 17. yea, he will make them Pillars in the Temple of God, and they shall go no more out, &c. yea, he

blessed State of the Saints above. 671

he will grant them to sit with him in his Throne, Rev. 3. 21. And he that sitteth on the Throne shall dwell among them: And the Lamb, which is in the midst of the Throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto living Fountains of Water, and God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; Rev. 7. 15, 17. See Rev. 21. 3, 24. & Rev. 22. 3, 4, 5. & Plal. 16. 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11. Whether Christ, who is God as well as Man, shall be the Conveyer of all to us from the Divine Nature, is not so certain; but this is sure, we shall then see God Face to Face: which signifieth the clearest Manifestation of his Glory, and of his Favour to the Blessed; for the Face is the Throne of Majesty and Beauty, and the Chrystal wherein the Affections of the Soul are conspicuous. Whether the immediate Essence of God can be seen by the intellectual Creature, is a Question; but we are certain, in that glorious Habitation and Heaven of his Presence, God exhibits himself to the Blessed in a most transcendent and glorious manner; that we shall stand continually in his Presence, and consequently derive our Life, and greatest Comforts and Felicity, immediately from him. All gross material things, in the lower Order of Nature here, are but weak, Resistances from his Perfections, in comparison of their glorious Effects in the Divine World. The Glories of that Place, and of the Inhabitants, the Angels and Saints, are the most noble Effects and Expressions of the Divine Attributes. But in a transcendent manner God exhibits himself in the glorify'd Mediator: He is still the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person; signifying thereby, that God, in the Person of the incarnate Mediator, is so fully represented to us, that in him we shall have a continual and abiding View of all God's unchangeable Perfections, when we shall see him as he is, in his exalted State, in the Majesty and Glory of the Son of God: We shall have in and thro him such a perfect Knowledge of the Divine Majesty, as our Minds can receive, and our Hearts desire. How little here do the best of Men apprehend of him, and what they do apprehend they are unable, in a becoming manner, to utter, concerning the glorious Nature of God, his Decrees and Counsels, his Providence and Dispensations; but they will then be more fully reveal'd, to our inexpressible Comfort and Satisfaction. What we receive here from him,

him, is at best but mediate, and must be so while we continue at this distance from him, and savour something of the Creatures that are the Instruments of their Conveyance to us; the Comforts that flow out to us from spiritual Ordinances, that are in themselves so highly valuable; and the Life that comes by these into the Believer's Soul (tho' truly precious and refreshing) yet how short are these, in comparison of those that are reach'd out at any time to his People more immediately from his own Hand? The Christian knows by Experience now, that his most immediate Joys are his sweetest Joys, and chiefly desirable; the Ordinances here, and all the Institutions of our blessed Lord, are inexpressibly valuable and advantageous to us, and needful for our spiritual Support and Comfort. There's Joy in these remote Receivings, for which we must be truly thankful; but the Fulness is in his own Presence. We must rejoice and be thankful for these Streams of Love, till we come to the Fountain, and receive all more immediately from God himself. We shall then know the Difference betwixt the Creature and the Creator, and the Content and Satisfaction that each of them affords. Beholding and Possessing will exclude the most of what we can now receive by Faith and Hope. We shall then have Communion without the Sacraments, which are so greatly advantageous to the People of God, when Christ shall drink with us of the Fruit of the Vine new, that is, refresh us with the comforting Wine of immediate Fruition in the Kingdom of his Father. We have now our Mercies, as Benjamin had Joseph's Cup: We find them at a distance from God, and understand not the good Will intended in them; but are often ready to fear they come in wrath, and think, it may be, they will work our Ruin. But when we shall feed at Joseph's own House, yea receive our Portion from his own Hand; when he shall fully unbowl his Love unto us, and take us to dwell in *Goshen* by him; when we shall live in our Father's House and Presence, and God shall be All in All: We shall then be fully at rest in him, and have an intire Satisfaction in his blessed Presence, in whose Presence is Fulness of Joy, and at whose right Hand there are Pleasures for evermore, Psal. 16. 11. The following Scriptures all point at the Blessedness of that State; it's call'd a Kingdom, Mat.

blest State of the Saints above.

673

25. 34. *A City which hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God, Heb. 11. 10. The Recompence of Reward, ver. 26. Eternal Life, Mat. 25. 34. A lively Hope, 1 Pet. 1. 3. An Inheritance incorruptible, and that fadeth not away, reserv'd in Heaven for us, ver. 4. Salvation, ver. 5. And great Salvation, Heb. 2. 3. A Treasure in Heaven, Mat. 6. 20. The Inheritance of the Saints in light, Col. 1. 12. A better and an enduring Substance, Heb. 10. 34. Paradise, where the Apostle heard things that were not lawful to utter, 2 Cor. 12. 4. A Crown of Glory, 1 Pet. 5. 4. An exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17. A being for ever with the Lord, and beholding his Glory.*

Let us read believingly the Description which is given us by the Holy Spirit, which he is pleas'd to accommodate to our poor and finite Apprehensions, while cloth'd with Flesh in this imperfect State, and we may take from thence a Glimpse of the inexpressible Beauty, Blessedness, and Glory of it. Read *Rev. 21.* throughout, and part of the 22d Chapter. And after all we can possibly apprehend or conceive thereof, we must conclude it far surpasses our dark and finite Conceptions of it; for this the holy Spirit hath himself assur'd us of, and that *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive* (in this State of Mortality and Imperfection) *the things which God hath prepar'd for them that love him, 1 Cor. 2. 9.*

Lastly, and that which is the Crown of our Crown, and compleats the Saints Happiness in Heaven, is this: They shall have the perpetual Enjoyment of all this Blessedness secur'd to them, without any fear of losing it, or being depriv'd of it for ever. Without this, all were indeed comparatively little or nothing; the very thought of once leaving it, would else imbitter all our Joys, and would pierce us the more, because of the singular Excellencies which we must forsake: it would be a Hell in Heaven, to think of once losing Heaven, as it would be a kind of Heaven to the Damned, had they but Hopes of being ever releas'd from thence; according to that Divine Poet,

Eternity! Eternity! Oh were it not for thee,

The Saints in Bliss and Happiness

Could never happy be.

Eternity! Eternity! Oh were it not for thee,

That Glimpse of Hope would mitigate

The Damned's Misery.

But this is (as much as possible) a heightning of the Saints Happiness in Heaven, that they shall never put off their glorious Robes after they have once put them on; their State is a sure eternal State of unspeakable Delight and Satisfaction: tho there be several Degrees of Glory there, yet he that enjoys the least Degree will be fully satisfied with what he enjoys, without finding any Satisfaction or Diminution, or fear of losing it again for ever. Oh blessed Eternity, where our Lives are perplex'd with no such Thoughts, nor our Joys interrupted with any such Fears! where we shall be Pillars in God's Temple, and go out no more. O what do I say, when I speak of Eternity? Can our shallow Thoughts conceive at all what the most high Expression of it doth contain? To be eternally blessed, and so blessed! Why, surely, this, if any thing, is the Resemblance of God himself, who is infinite in his Being and Blessedness. Eternity is a piece of Infiniteness; well may Believers then say, *O Death! where is thy Sting? O Grave! where is thy Victory?* Days, and Nights, and Years, Time, and the end of Time, are words which there have no signification, except perhaps to extol Eternity, as the mention of Hell, to extol Heaven; all the Years of our Lord, and the Years of our Lives, are swallow'd up and lost in this Eternity. While we were Servants, we held by Lease, and that for the Term of a transitory Life; but *the Son abideth in the House for ever.* This heavenly Paradise hath a way in (a milky way to us, but a bloody way to Christ) but no way out again, as our first and earthly Paradise in Eden had; for *they that would pass from hence to you (saith Abraham) cannot.* Luke 16. 24. Would any pass from such a Place if they might? Could they indure to be absent from God one Hour or Moment? No, but upon supposal that they would, yet they could not. O! then my Soul, let go thy Dreams of present Pleasures, and lose thy hold of Earth and

and Fleſh: Fear not to enter that Eſtate, where thou ſhalt ever after ceaſe thy Fears. Sit down, and ſadly once a day bethink thy ſelf of this Eternity: Study the Value of this infinite Cypher, which tho it ſtand for nothing in the vulgar Account, doth yet contain all our Millions, as being much leſs than a ſimple Unit, if compar'd with it. Fix thine Eye on this Eternity; one Hour's ſerious musing and meditating on the Glory that is above, would cauſe the Soul to be as a wean'd Child, in reference to all the Glories that are here below. What! live, and never die! Rejoice, and ever rejoice! What ſweet and delightful words are theſe, *Rivers of Pleaſures*, and ever *drawing*, and *rejoicing* in them! O happy Souls in Hell, ſhould you but eſcape after Millions of Ages! And O miſerable Saints in Heaven, ſhould you be diſpoſed again, after the Age of a Million of Worlds! But O this word, *Everlaſting*, contains the accompliſhed Perfection of their Torment, and our Glory. O that the wicked Sinner would but ſoundly ſtudy this word *Everlaſting*, methinks it ſhould ſtattle him out of his deadeſt Sleep and Security! And O that the gracious Soul would believingly ſtudy it, methinks it ſhould revive him in the deepeſt Agony! This would make our Sufferings light, Rom. 8. 18. *For I reckon that the Sufferings of this preſent time (ſays the Apoſtle) are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in us.* This would make us more ſerious in Duties; it would make us pray earneſtly, hear attentively, walk circumſpectly. Serious Thoughts of Heaven would make us ſhake off our Lazineſs and Sloth, and with Fervency of Spirit to ſerve the Lord. And it would ſtir us up to an earneſt Deſire of that Righteouſneſs and Holineſs, to which ſuch a Glory appertains; and to a diligent, faithful, and conſtant Diſcharge of thoſe Duties, to which ſuch a Reward is ſo graciously promiſed: *For without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord.* Men do but deceive themſelves, who think to paſs immediately from a State of Corruption, to a State of Glory. If we would enter into Glory, this celeftial State of Happineſs, let us labour to ſecure our State in Grace firſt; Grace and Glory, differ not ſpecifically, but gradually. When a Soul is brought into a State of Saving Grace, it is entered into the beginning of Glory: For as God hath prepared Heaven for his Children, ſo

he prepares them for Heaven here, by infusing the Graces of his Spirit into their Hearts. Grace is the Nursery of Glory; and as the Plants of Righteousness grow fit for Heaven, they are removed thither, and shall be for ever with the Lord. Then sure our Love to him may well abide for ever; and seeing our Joys and Glory we shall then possess, will be immortal and never cease, shall we not render immortal Thanks and Praises to him, for that boundless Grace and Love which hath redeemed and brought us thither?

O blessed Lord, prepare and fit my Soul for this New Jerusalem, into which no Unclean thing can enter; give me true Repentance for all my Sins, and wash away the Guilt of them in the Blood of thy dear Son, my blessed Lord and Saviour. Sanctify me throughout both in Soul and Body, by thy Grace and Holy Spirit, and enable me to glorify thee here, that I may hereafter enter into thy Kingdom, into that Eternal State of Glory. O let me not have my Portion in this Life, but when thou takest me hence by Death, O Lord receive me (for thy Mercy and my blessed Saviour's Merits sake) into those heavenly Mansions, where there is fullness of Joy, and Pleasures at thy Right Hand, for ever more. And to thee, O King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible, the only wise God, shall be the Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

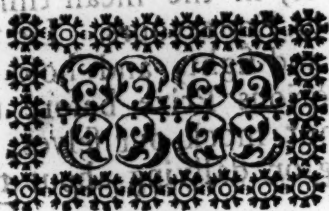
And thus we may see in the Description that hath been given, a Glimpse of this approaching Glory. And yet how short are these Expressions of its Excellency! But if we be humble and sincere Believers, and wait with longing and labouring for this blessed State, we shall shortly see and feel the truth of all this; we shall then have so high an Apprehension of this Blessedness and Glory, that will make us pity the Ignorance and Distance of Mortals; and will tell us then, that all that is here said, is spoken but in the Dark, and falls short a thousand fold. But let it, in the mean time, kindle our Desires, and quicken our Endeavours. Let us up and be doing, run and strive, and fight, and hold on; for we have a most certain glorious Prize before us. God will not mock us, let us not mock our selves; nor betray our Souls, by delaying or dallying about this great Concern;

Concern; and all is our own. What kind of Men would Christians be in their Lives and Duties, if they had still this Glory fresh in their Thoughts? What Frame would their Spirits be more constantly in, if their Thoughts of Heaven were lively and believing? Would they have need to take up their Comforts so much from below? Would they be so loth to suffer, and afraid to die? Or would they not think every Day a Year, till they did enjoy it, and their Eyes beheld those glorious Objects, that *Three in One*, whom Angels and Saints do praise, and the whole Host of Heaven in Extasies of holy Love and Joy will be admiring, magnifying, and adoring for ever?

I shall close all with that holy Breathing and Aspiration after Heaven [that blessed and glorious State of the Saints above] part of which I find in the Close of Hymns wrote by the Reverend Mr. Cradock.

*Bless'd Souls! who in that State above,
Are full of Glory, full of Love;
(Where nothing enters that defiles,
No Lust, nor Sin, nor Satan's Wiles:
Where Faith will change into clear Vision,
And Hope into a full Fruition:
Where we shall see Christ's blessed Face,
And holy Souls will us embrace:
Where Seas of Blessedness remain,
And Griefs will ne'er return again:
Where God's Aspect yields more delight,
Than thousand Suns who ne'er so bright:
Where holy Love will endless be,
Through th' Ages of Eternity.*

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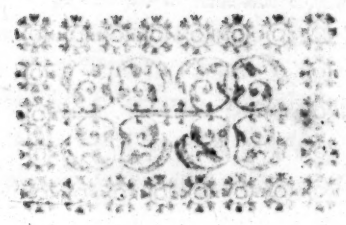


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 Are full of Glory, full of Love;
 Where nothing is but bliss,
 No End, no Want, no Sin;
 Where Faith is now clear Vision,
 And Hope is now Possession;
 Where the Lord's Face is the blessed Face,
 And holy Souls will no converse;
 Where Sons of Bless'dness remain,
 And Ghosts will ne'er return again;
 Where God's All's yields more delight,
 Than thousand Joys that ne'er so bright;
 Where holy Love will endless be,
 Through all Ages of Eternity.

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